

# HERBIE!

BY ~~Bill~~ LOUGHLIN TEXT BY J.D.M.







Jack McLean





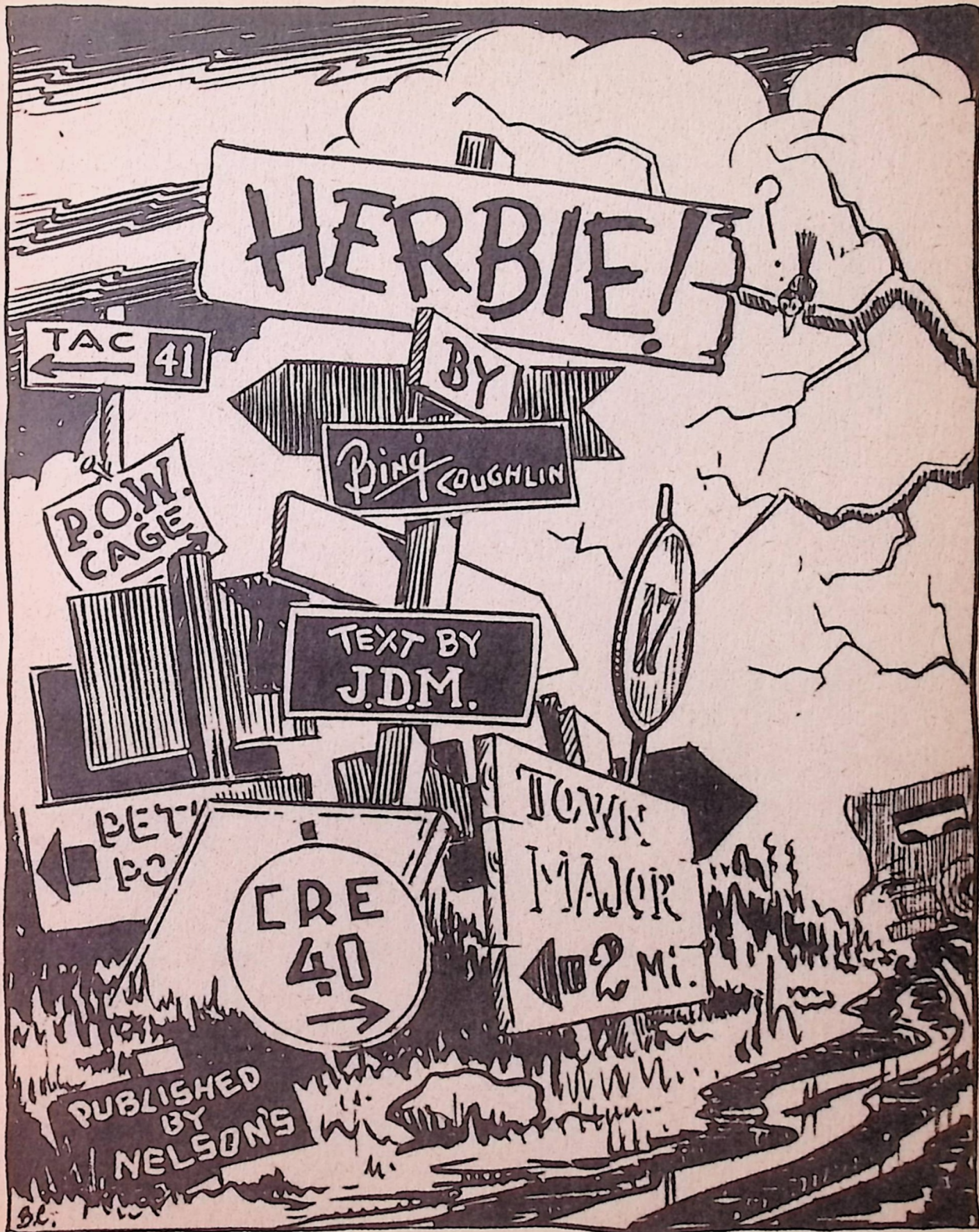


HERBIE











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*Dedicated*  
*to*  
*The Canadian Fighting Man*







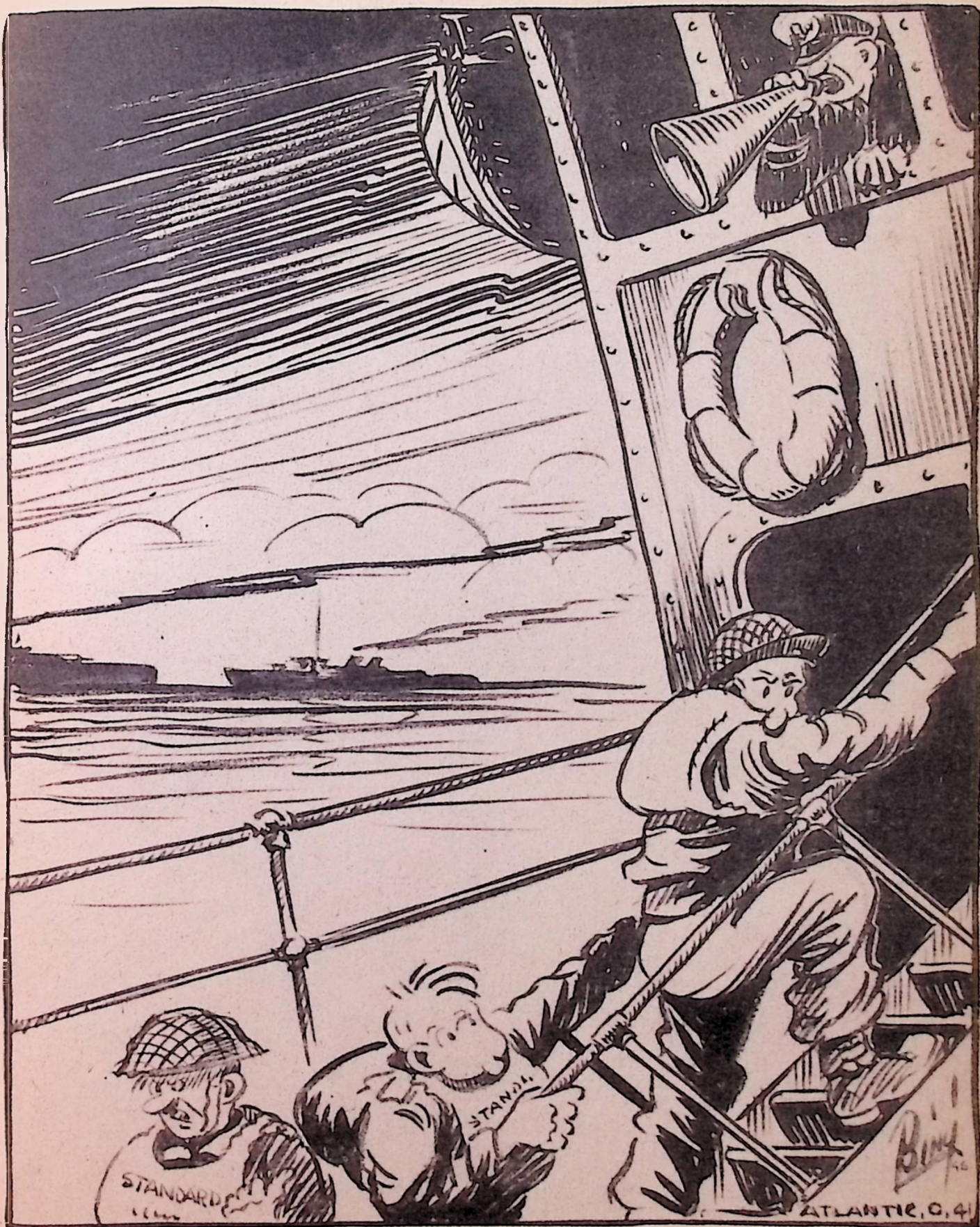
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"IMAGINE A ROYAL FLUSH IN M'HAND JEST AS THE DOG-GONE ALARM SOUNDS!"



# I

## HERBIE

### *His Character...If Any*

**I**T was on the Italian Front. A long time ago. When a guy needed more than points to get out of the army.

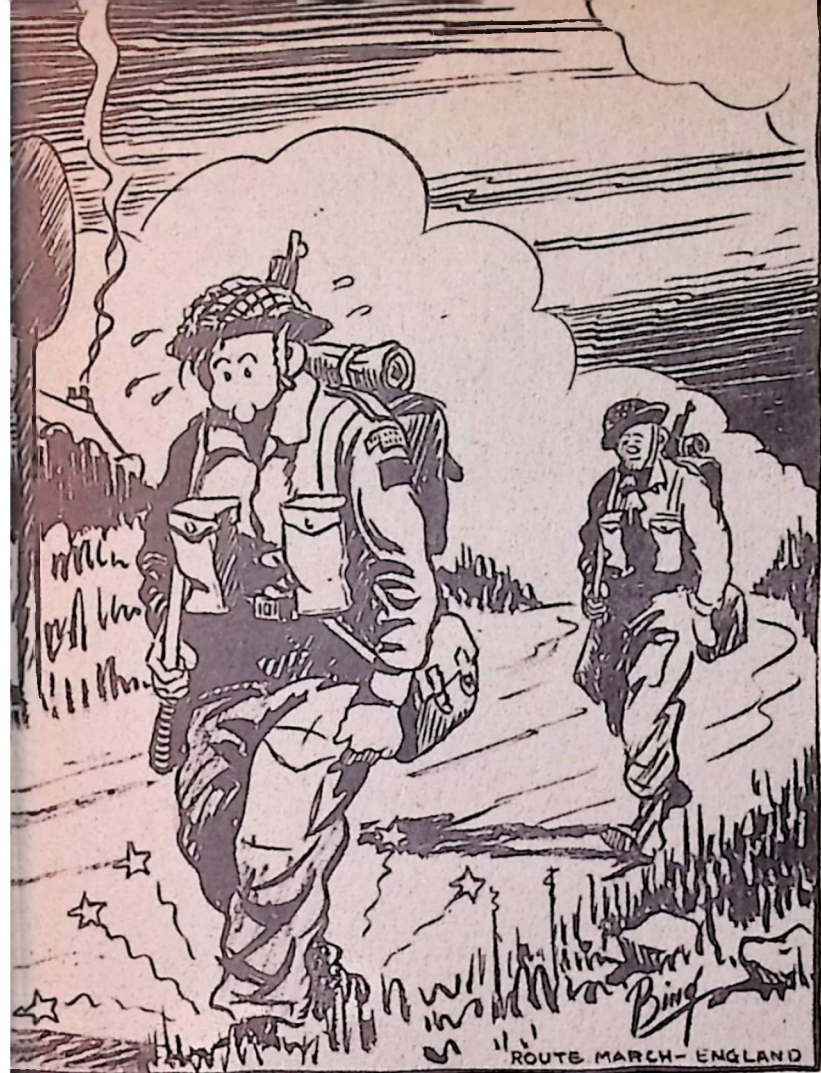
He was one of a very select group. He had pushed a pair of army boots ahead of him through the dust that was summer in Sicily and up Italy to Ortona without even a mosquito bite. But the law of averages was to catch up with him.

He was just a little operator, weighed less than 130 pounds when he staggered soaking wet onto a Sicily beach . . . his leap for shore had been inadequate, his pack heavy, the air bubbles in his wake impressive. Maybe his size had something to do with his safety. The gents in his platoon swore the opposition always misjudged the range when they got him in their sights. But his day came . . . and the load of grief that tumbled off fortune's truck on top of him was overpowering.

He stopped one in the face. A round from a German schmeizzer ploughed through his cheek, came out over his right eye and he couldn't see. He fell all of a heap on the road, the helmet that he hated rolling into the muddy ditch. And his pals laid him gently atop a tank.

The tank was hit by a shell and he was thrown to the ground. But he didn't whimper. He knew what was going on. He knew the insult that had been added to injury. But he didn't say a word. His pals laid him gently in a slit trench.





"RIGHT NOW ME OLE DOGS ARE  
SO TIRED THEY'RE WALKIN'  
FROM MEMORY!"

**SPARTAN EXERCISES**  
— U. K. —







*"BOMBS! — THANK GOODNESS,  
I THOUGHT IT WUZ MORE  
THUNDER'N RAIN!"*

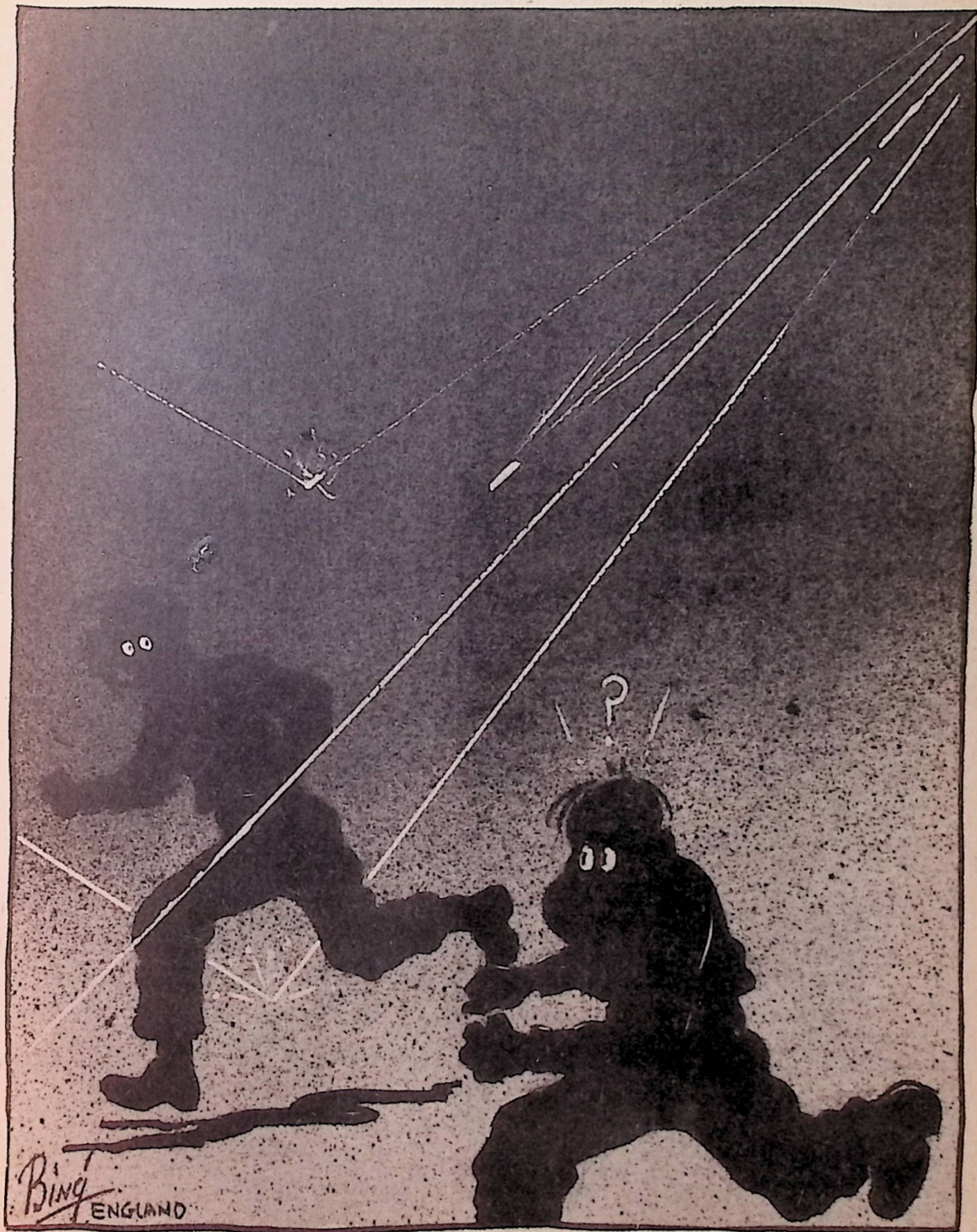
Another tank thundered by about six inches from the trench and half-buried him. It couldn't happen but it did. He staggered out under shell fire. His pals grabbed him, laid him gently in an ambulance jeep.

While he was being rushed to a casualty clearing station, an enemy Minnie moaned a direct hit on the jeep. He was thrown out, with three ribs fractured, his face a bloody mess, one arm hanging crooked and limp. But he was still conscious. And as they gently picked him up, he said softly:

"Tell me one thing . . . are you Germans?"

He could have been Herbie. He probably was . . . the Herbie of his outfit. Certainly he was the Herbie of the Canadian Army for that day. Because everything happened to Herbie in and out of the book. An unofficial army spokesman avows that it would require the services of 42 clerks for 21 years to compile anything resembling a full and accurate record of Herbie's military career . . .





"SO IT WAS ONE OF OURS!"



which undoubtedly would make the clerks very unhappy indeed.

This effort is intended to spare these 42 clerks— —who have had enough trouble getting out of the army as it is—any further unhappiness. In some cases, it will deal with the antics of this Canadian Army character. In others, it will attempt to describe the conditions which led him up the vineyard path to the casa of fame and fortune, ill though they may have been at times. It can hardly be termed an unexpurgated recipe of what cooked in Herbie's stew. Herbie was never the one to expurgate so somebody had to do it for him.

Call it fact. Call it fiction. Call it Herbie.

\* \* \* \*

All Canadians, whether they have been aware of it or not, are personally acquainted with this man of many moods and misfortunes. For Herbie IS the Canadian Army. He is the ambassador-at-large who almost missed the troop train for Halifax, was less one crown and anchor board on arrival overseas, got lost in the London Underground, drunk in the Queen's at Aldershot, failed to salute that flag car at Leatherhead, holed up with a simply delightful English family on Exercise Spartan and was unholed by the provost. He was first in the bully beef barter queue in Sicily, thrown for a loss by vino rosso, midwife at a bambino's birth in Italy, stubbed his toe on the Normandy beach and became D-Day's first casualty thereby. He fought and franc'd his way through France and Belgium, fell into an Amsterdam canal, thought V2 fluid was hopped-up Calvados, was brought back to life, cautioned the postal corps to strike him off strength and came home.

'Tis rumored Herbie had a brother in the Air Force and a cousin in the Navy. But he didn't talk about them much. He was strictly an army guy . . . up to a point . . . 241 points. He beefed and he moaned and he cursed



"Come, come my little friends  
..... time to rise .....  
..... I SAID IT'S TIME TO  
GET UP, ..... C'MON YOU  
BUMS, — CRAWL OUT!"



"BY JOVE! OLE FELLOW, KINDLY  
INFORM THESE BLINKIN'  
CANADIANS THAT THIS IS ONLY  
A TRAINING SCHEME!"



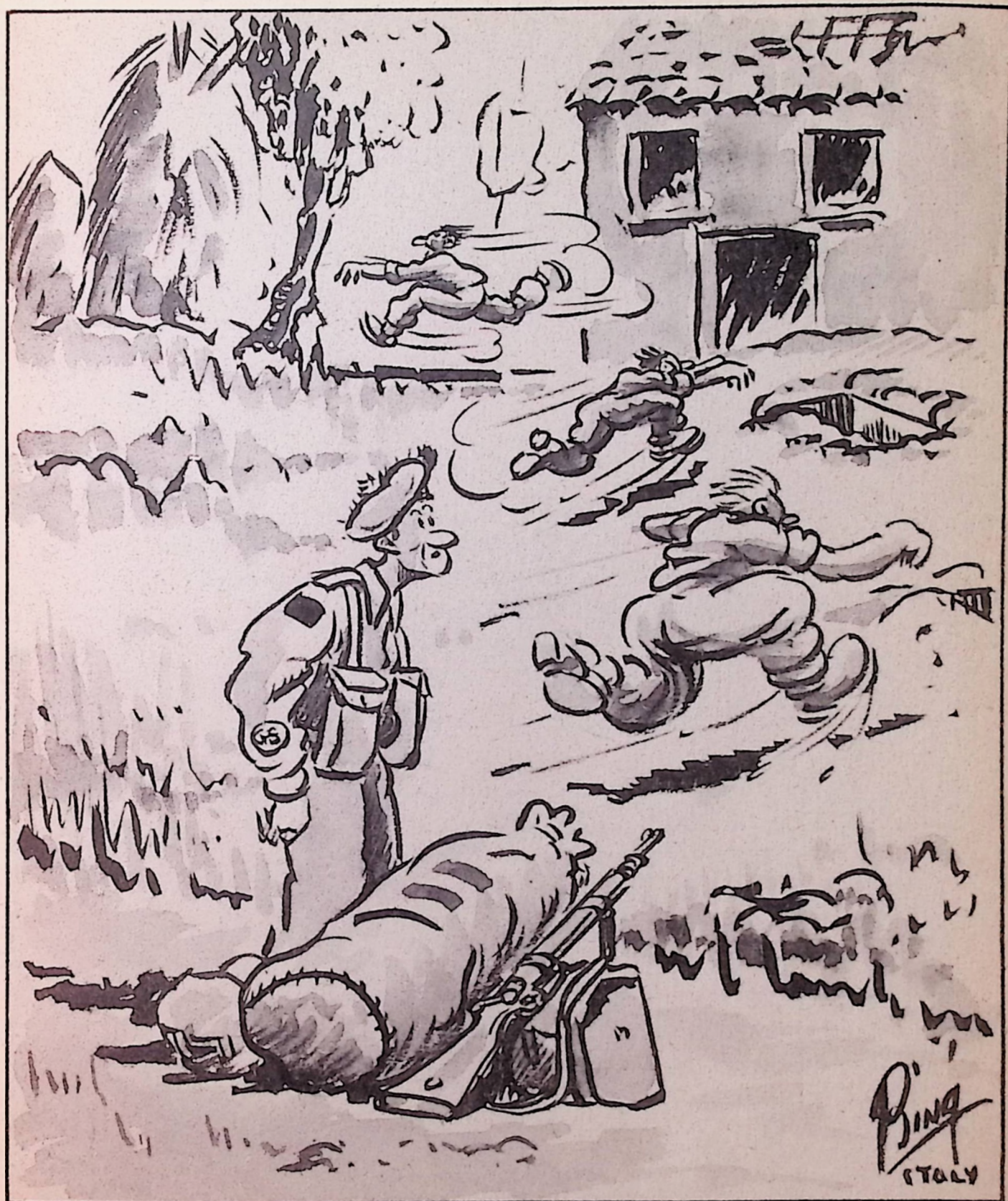


**"THEY AINT GOT NOTHIN' OUR  
GIRLS HAVEN'T GOT, ONLY  
THEY'VE GOT IT HERE!"**

and he groaned. To him, all brass was tarnished, particularly any associated with hats. The sergeant-major was a bastard whose ancestry was somehow hooked up with Romulus and Remus. Anybody with hooks on his sleeve was a public menace and shoulder adornment was something to be shunned.

The grub was lousy because the cooks were morons . . . and anyway British rations shouldn't even happen to a dachshund. No suit of battledress ever really fitted anybody and web equipment was a snare and a delusion. Pay parade was such a constant source of disappointment that the business of financing one's operations could become an excruciating experience when the bottom dropped out of the bully beef and blanket market. The dentist jammed uppers in mouths that needed lowers. The MO's prescriptions were limited to No. 9's and a gargle that didn't even taste like alcohol. Nobody believed that you'd been sick and couldn't get back from your leave . . 14 days CB. The army was hell.





HERE COMES A MOANIN' WHAT??



But, in his own rebellious, civilian way, Herbie was known to like it at times. He was like the proverbial refrigerator salesman who toured the Yukon, said he didn't make much money but sure saw a lot of country. He got around and he had his moments. He was free with his dough and the women were free with him. He told them about his gopher ranch in Vancouver, his country home in Oxbow, poured an unhealthy potion from the bottle he had bummed from the sergeant (liquor issue limited to rank of sergeant and above), demonstrated a brand new Canadian encircling movement and they loved it.

He was suitably impressed by Westminster Abbey and the Tower of London, paid his respects to equally famous characters in Madame Tussaud's, found out, on leave in Aberdeen, that at least one of his forefathers had come from Scotland, with soda, introduced some absolutely new words to the Italian, French and Dutch languages, burped sympathetically with Mt. Vesuvius, gawked at the Eiffel Tower, gaped at the Vatican, was awed by the opera, pub crawled, got drunk, got sick, got homesick, got home.

He travelled a lot, saw a lot, talked a lot, listened a lot. He trained and waited, trained and waited and waited, fought and waited and waited and waited, fought and waited and waited and waited and waited. Hurry up and wait. That was his routine. He didn't know exactly what he was fighting for besides to keep alive. He knew it had something to do with the Four Freedoms but he wasn't too sure what the fourth one was, never could remember more than three.

He had as good a time as the law of the army would allow, and a much better time when he was breaking it. Relatively speaking, it wasn't much but he made the most of it. He was brave, fought well and hard. He was scared a pale, sickly green at times, so scared that his stomach muscles contracted, his insides became a sudden





"BROKE IT TRYIN' TO SPREAD  
THIS NEW KINDA MARGARINE!"

"STEELA DA CHICK  
EH?"





vacuum and he upchucked all over his battledress. He was roasted. He was frozen. He gulped mepacrine tablets and turned yellow. Then he had jaundice and turned more so. He swallowed ascorbic acid tablets and had violent nightmares about corned beef and dehydrated cabbage. He had malaria and shook. He had a hangover and shook. He had a night patrol and shook. He made seven straight passes in a crap game and the boys shook.

He was a gentleman in the parlor, a bum in the backyard. The little finger of his right hand stuck out for all the elite to see as he sipped his benedictine, he used his fork like a brace and bit when he managed to surround a steak. He gave the Limeys cigarettes, stole jeeps from the Yanks. He bulldozed his way through Italy, France, Belgium, Holland and into Germany. He had a smell of Africa. And in all his travels, he saw many things he didn't like, a few he did. For the first time, he came really to appreciate his own country. He was proud to be a Canadian. He had grown up and his country had grown up with him. He didn't like to be called "British troops". He was a Canadian. He came from Canada. His first name was Herbie, his second name . . . Canadian. Pte. Herbie Canadian. That was it. That was important.

\* \* \* \*

It is only natural to assume from all this that Herbie was everybody and nobody. But call it a paradox or what you will, actually—as they are prone to put it in the wilds of Whitehall—there was a real Herbie—a prototype, a pilot model. He lived and breathed and had some semblance of a being. He was the basic immediate inspiration. He was the comic ideal. His name, appropriately enough, was Smith and he was very much in the army.

Until recently, his identity was hidden in a military document marked TOP SECRET, almost in the class of FRIGHTFULLY SECRET, BURN BEFORE READING.





"IT SHOULDN'T EVEN HAPPEN TO A DOG!"



He didn't look like Herbie. Nobody, it is hoped, has been that unfortunate. But he was a character, at times the character, there was no doubt about that. The man who made the marks and blobs on paper that pictured the adventures of Herbie knew him well. They came from the same town, joined the same unit, went overseas together.

Norman Pallister Smith, that was his name. He brought to the army a rare sense of the humorous, a peculiar facility for getting himself in and out of trouble, a happy faculty for keeping his fellow gentlemen of the military entertained. He enlisted with the Princess Louise Dragoon Guards, better known as the Plugs or Piddly-Gees, despite reported regimental annoyance at same. He was born in Ottawa, would merely suggest that, after all, it WAS the capital of Canada when the argument got around to the good towns and the good men they produced.

His career with the PLDG's is rather obscure. In successive shuffles of personnel he wound up with the engineers, became a draughtsman, then moved to The Maple Leaf, Canadian Army newspaper, as artist, staff, maps, for the production of. He was back with "Bing" and the reunion was explosive if an alcoholic understatement may be employed. It wasn't long before a chinless, forlorn little character in battledress started showing up in the Coughlin cartoons in the role of an interested, if slightly bewildered spectator. It was "Smitty." He couldn't be repressed and he couldn't stay in the background long. So the little man became the army's Herbie and Herbie became the army.

Smith, with his singing goldfish act, his pansy at a baseball game, his Moanin' Mabel answer to the Minnie, his handlebar moustache that couldn't stand repatriation, his four-line poems that didn't rhyme, that didn't do anything . . . he was the specific Herbie if there ever was



"THE OLE MAN SEZ WE'RE T'BE  
ON THE LOOKOUT FER A STRONG  
PATROL, AN' T'BE CAREFUL  
'CAUSE THEY'LL PROBABLY BE  
RUSSIANS."



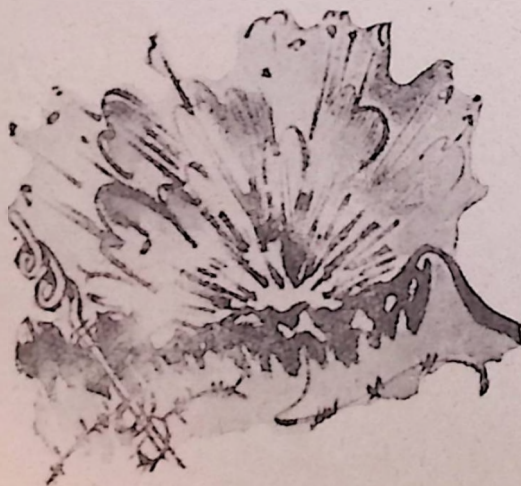
"JEEZ! . . . . EVEN THE KITCHEN  
SINK!"



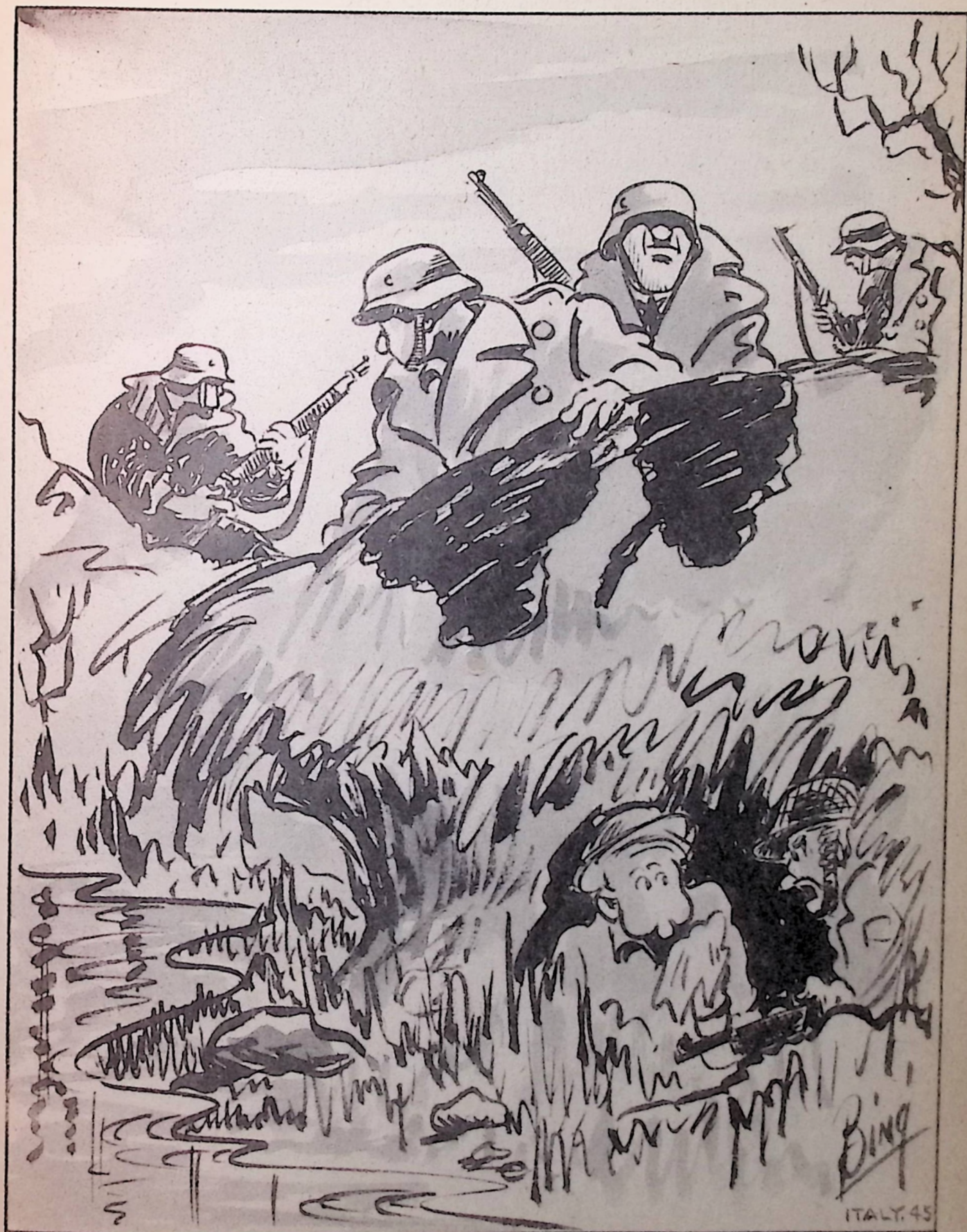
one. He was up and down so many times, he had four different uniforms carrying the rank of everything up to a sergeant. Saved him sewing pains, he said.

He knew enough to come in out of the rain but always got wet. His mother's last words had been to be sure and keep warm but he seldom had any blankets—the market was too good, he confided. He knew enough to keep files of his maps but they always seemed to get into a doublecross index. He provided Canadian soldiers with many a laugh in his own way but they didn't know it. Now they do.

He bowed out of the army, the only man to hold the honorable rank of lance-sapper. We take great pleasure and deem it an honor hereby to confer on him this mention in these despatches. It may make up, in part, for the wound stripe he didn't get when a piece of Allied flak hit him in the posterior during a Naples air-raid. Stand up, son. Up, that is.







"NO! I CERTAINLY WOULD NOT ADVISE MAKIN' A NOISE LIKE A DUCK!"



## II

### *What Are Little European Girls Made of?*

*or*

*It Must Be Jelly 'cause Jam Don't Shake Like That...*

AS one soldier said to the other . . . "Shall we start talking about women now or lead up to it indirectly?"

We embark on this piece, after bravely batting out the title, with considerable trepidation, knowing full well that any number of happily-married gents wearing those lovely exit buttons in their lapels forgot to take out the firing pins when they brought back souvenir arsenals. A horrible vision of having to enlist for life with the Occupation Force in Germany to escape the blast of irate



**"WHAT HAVE YOU FER A  
HUNDRED LIRE THAT WON'T  
EXPLODE?"**







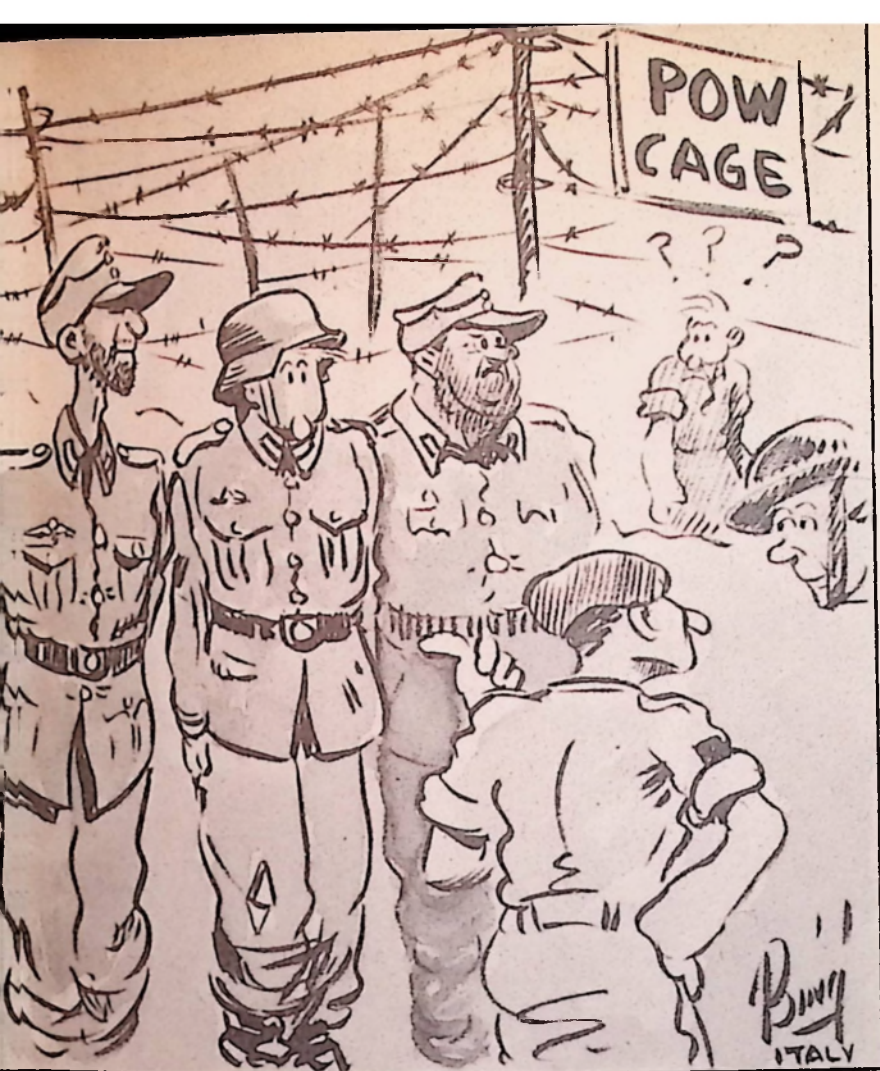
husbands is more than enough to erase any idea we might have in the line of a smashing, gripping, condemning exposé of the co-educational activities of Canadian troops overseas . . . if we had the material for such an exposé, which we haven't of course . . . if there was anything to expose, which there isn't of course.

Just to be on the safe side, however, it must be emphasized that any information regarding the makeup of little European girls or jelly and jam was gathered by specially employed agents who are unmarried, unpromised, untouched or were before they started the survey. As a matter of fact, they didn't know that nylon was used for anything more than making parachutes and thought girls were just a mistake that put the blight on the Garden of Eden. So it was with an unfettered and undamaged mind, body and soul that they set out on this admittedly hazardous mission to learn the wiles and wherefors of young ladies, signorini, mesdamoiselles, meijses and (tch, tch)



**"TIMES A WASTIN', HAND ME  
A GRENADE!"**





"DOES HERBIE KNOW ABOUT THIS?"

"LOOK CHUM, WHEN I WANT  
BREAKFAST IN BED I'LL TELL  
YOU."





frauleins. What did they learn? WOW! Or rather, shall we say, "very interesting".

The term ladies we have chosen to apply to the young and not so young things that populate Great Britain. Even a British war bride will undoubtedly agree that this is quite a sweeping bit of nomenclature for the women of any land. But one can't go 'round calling the future mothers or maybe even the mothers of a nation a bunch of old bags and get away with it indefinitely. Definitely not. Even if they are a bunch of old bags, which they aren't of course.

"And, anyway, British war brides are not involved in this because they're Canadian citizens", adds Herbie, in a sudden but very commendable show of caution.

But to get back to the young ladies, who seem to be in great abundance in the Mother Country. Some undoubtedly wouldn't have the title if it hadn't been handed down to them on an ancestral platter. Some, we're sure unknowingly, damaged their reputation more than somewhat by a strange habit of blackout strolling in the Piccadilly Circus area, thus providing the nucleus of one of the most famous units of the war—the "Piccadilly Commandos." It is said that some Canadian and American troops suffered heavy casualties in skirmishes with the "Piccadilly Commandos" and the War Office at one time considered striking a Piccadilly campaign ribbon but abandoned it as no records of service were available.

Some of Britain's younger set staggered visiting Canadian firemen by their seemingly unlimited capacity for Gin and It. Some exhibited weird and baffling reactions to the first strains of that well-known fighting song "Knees Up, Mother Brown, Don't Get the Breeze Up, etc." Some had bicycled too much in their adolescent days, some not enough. Some, at a tender age, had been lost in the Underground for a couple of years and never quite got over it. And some were be-e-e-autiful things





**"YOU SCRAM! THERE AINT ROOM FOR THREE HERE."**

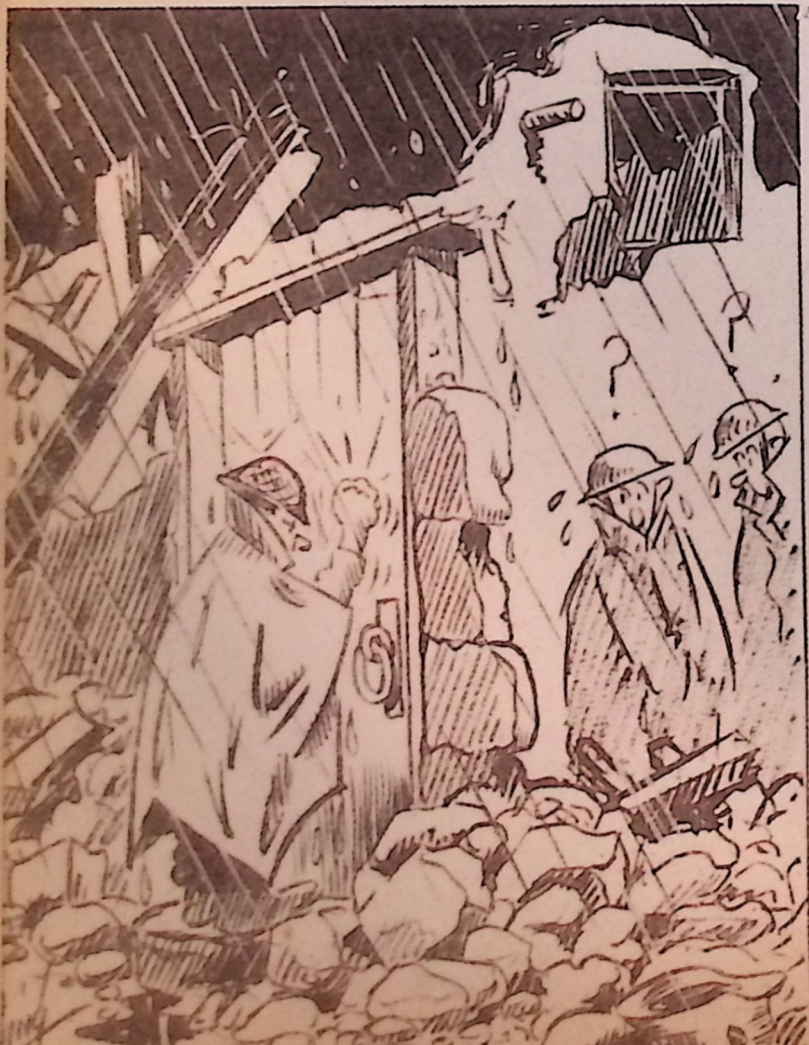


that led you to sing the blues in the night.

Aside from all this variety, it can be stated without fear of contradiction that the average young lady encountered on the downs of Old Epsom, or in the alleys of Soho was friendly. Very, very friendly. Our agents report that it was heart-warming, to say the least, to receive such a grand, sincere and enthusiastic welcome to the British Isles. They further state that never has such a welcome been so sustained, and insist it augurs well for the future of the ties that bind the Commonwealth.

It is claimed these ties were becoming so tight at one stage that the Third Canadian Division was being considered for the operational role of holding a defensive perimeter around Eighth Army disembarkation points and fighting a delaying action until the Second Division was able to move Canadian kit out of 15,000 English bedrooms.

One enterprising young agent, taking his job a bit more



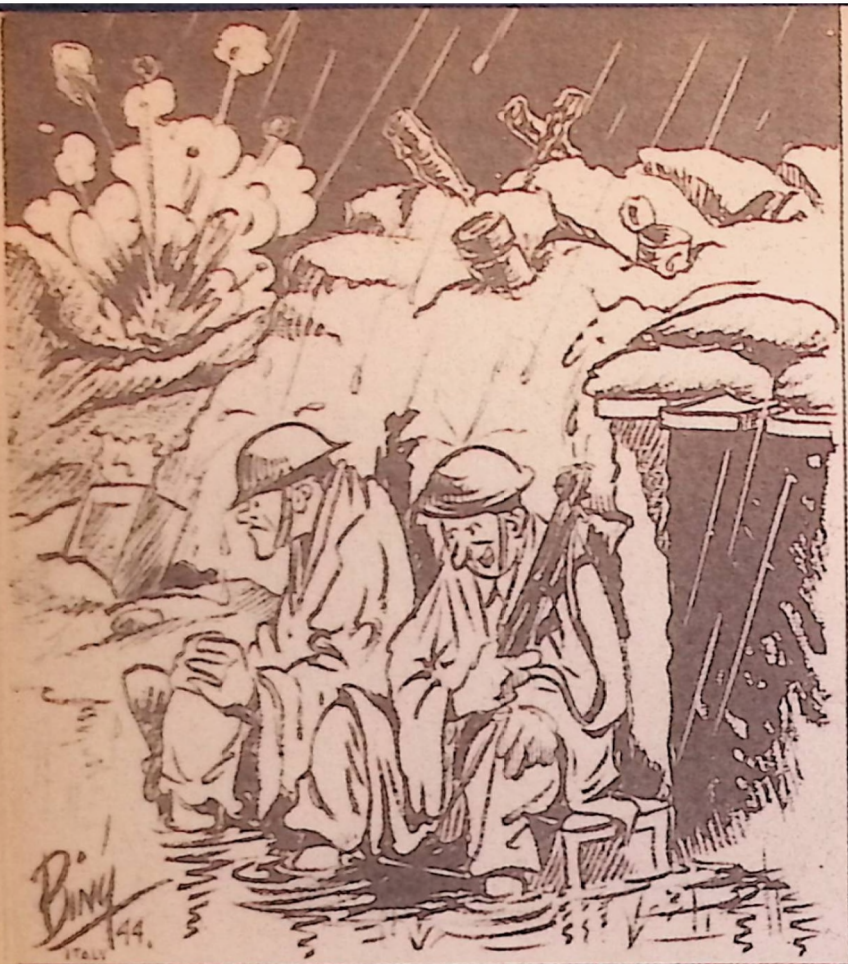
**"FER GAWDS SAKE OPEN UP,  
IT'S RAININ' CATS AND DOGS  
OUT HERE."**





"TAKE IT EASY LADS, WE'RE WORKIN' FER GEORGE TOO!"





**"AND TO THINK WE PAID GOOD MONEY TO SEE THIS IN THE MOVIES BACK HOME."**

seriously than the rest, filed a series of case histories to illustrate this spirit of friendship, one of which we quote as follows:

"There's this captain in the artillery and he ain't been to London for a long time. He's bushed, see. He's been on the coast, hoping he'll get a look at a mermaid or something but the mermaids are playing hard to get. So he comes to London and he's riding in the tube when this doll gets on at Green Park. She parks her packages beside him and he can see from the start that she's got class. So he asks her the way to Charing Cross and she says he's going the wrong way. So he says maybe they should get off at the next station and she could explain to him the right way over a double in the Spider and Sparrow. And she says maybe she could and she does.

"Now this captain is not without foresight and he has already chartered a room in the Savoy, this being before the American invasion when chartering rooms in the





"FOR THE LAST TIME . . . .  
CUT OUT THIS "QUACK, QUACK"  
STUFF."

"BIGGEST BLOOMIN' DRAFT I'VE  
 EVER SEEN!"





Savoy was possible. And one friendly thing leads to another and dinner and things. By 9 p.m., she and the captain are in his room having another dainty double from the captain's crock and she is talking about going home. He is not too disappointed for he knows from the start that she's got class and doesn't figure for a score but nobody can prevent him from dreaming.

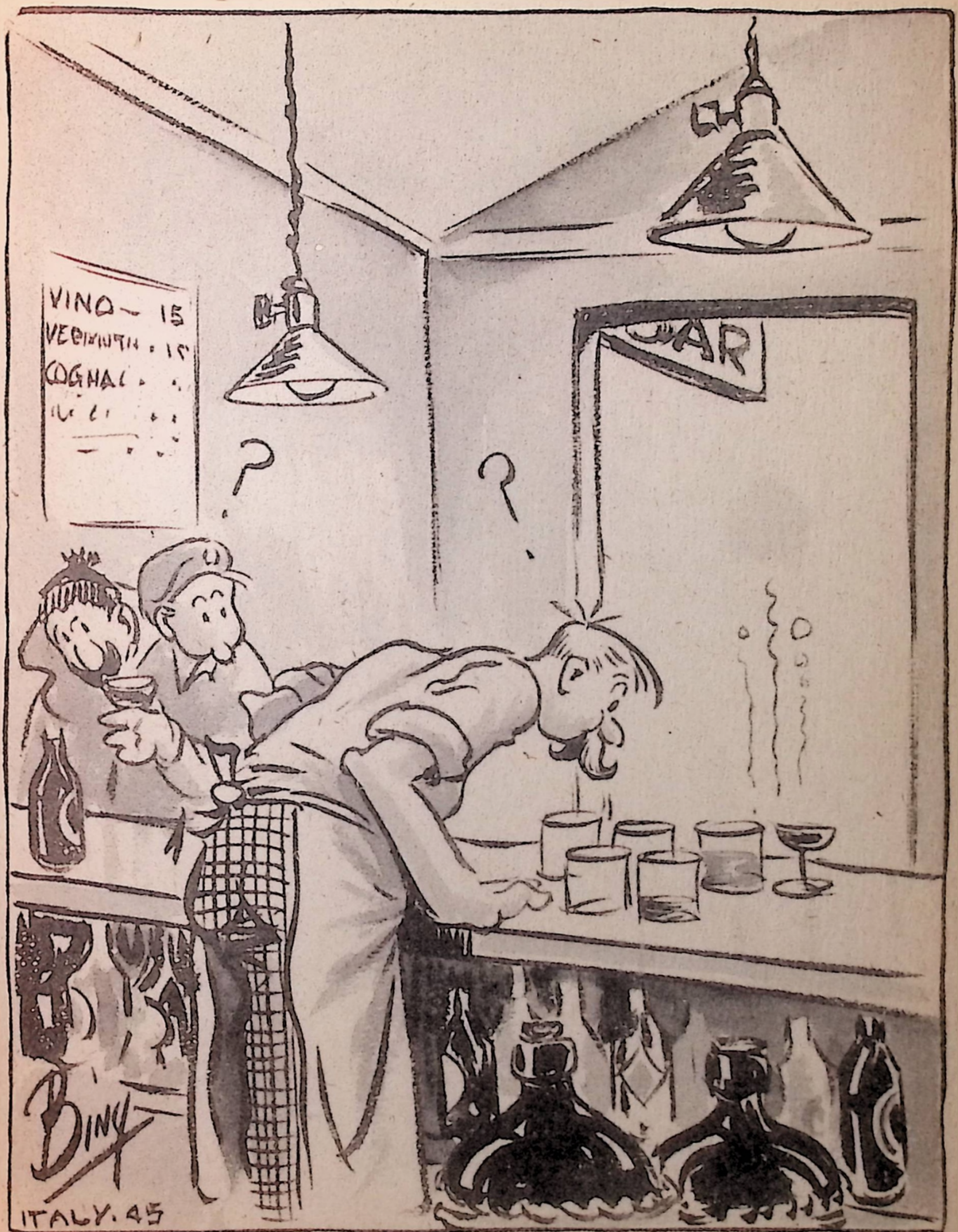
"Just about as she's due to give him the cheerio, toodlee-o and all that stuff, the sirens go and there is more than considerable in the way of a do upstairs. The guns is booming, the bombs is busting and it really is quite noisy. Now this doll is by no means frightened but she says her mother will be very worried as to her whereabouts with such goings-on and may she phone the mater. The captain, who is pouring himself a triple for luck, gives her the nod and, after the usual delay, she speaks into the phone something like this:

"'Oh, Muthaw, Zinia here. I hope you haven't been



**"PERHAPS IT WOULD INTEREST  
SIGNOR TO KNOW THAT I  
UNDERSTAND AND SPEAK  
ENGLISH FLUENTLY!!"**





"FINITO SIGNOR???"





*"SI SIGNOR, THE GERMANS  
TOOK AWAY EVERYTHING OF  
VALUE!"*

worried, old thing. Actually, I'm quite all right. I'm with the nicest Canadian captain, in his hotel room, the Savoy you know. And I do know how much you worry about me being out in the raids, so I thought I'd just stay here all night. The captain won't mind, I'm sure. Yes, muthaw, I'll see you in the morning. Do be careful and don't worry. 'Night, dawling.'

"That, confides the captain to me personal, is real friendship. I agree."

So say we all.

\* \* \* \*

Such case histories would seem to place the stamp of fabrication on reports that the abundance of cash which the Canadian soldier has at his disposal had any influence on the amount of friendship forthcoming from the average young lady of the Isles. But, in the event that you claim Missouri as your native state, we refer you to the writings of a neutral Australian observer in the London Sunday





"IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE WE'D LIKE, . . DID YOU SAY???"



Dispatch who made an extensive study of such things.

Before he got the answer, this gentleman reported asking himself 100 times: "Why do British girls go so eagerly for these Canadians and Americans in uniform? Why do they seem more excited and stirred in the company of these men from across the Atlantic?" He explained:

"It wasn't that I thought British girls weren't happy to go out with men of the British forces, but they seemed to get some sort of extra-romantic kick out of the company of Canadians and Americans.

"Then suddenly I knew the reason. It had nothing to do with money, manners or morals.

"It was all a matter of accent.

"What has given these Canadian and American visitors a prefabricated personality that has irresistible charm? The films. When a young woman of these Islands hears a crisp tough American accent, she thinks of Clark Gable or Humphrey Bogart. When she hears a slow, shy drawl, she thinks of Gary Cooper or James Stewart. When she hears an elegant compromise between the tough and the timid, she thinks of Robert Taylor or Fred MacMurray.

"There's no doubt about it—the voice of the American film star (male) is the voice of love. The voice of the British romantic film star is cool and clean as spring lettuce. His love-making is awfully decent and damned chilly.

"Mark you, I'm not suggesting that actors in British films can't make love as romantically as the Hollywood lot. Those to blame for our calm and gentlemanly British screen lovers are chiefly the writers, directors and producers, who avoid anything that has the flavor of genuine passion, and hasten nervously through any scene that might possibly contain any suggestion of warm, human, whole-hearted love.

"So no wonder the trans-Atlantic voice is the voice of romance for the British girl. No wonder these Canadians



*"KEEP YER SHIRT ON, WE'LL BE  
AT THE BOTTOM IN NOTHIN'  
FLAT!"*



*"MAKES INTERESTING READING,  
DOESN'T IT!"*



and Americans have a kind of copyright on love."

You see, chum, it wasn't the cash, it was the accent—actually. Their friendship was no lease-lendship. It said right there in the Sunday Dispatch.

\* \* \* \*

Which all seems to tell us more about how the young ladies of Britain are made than what they're made of.

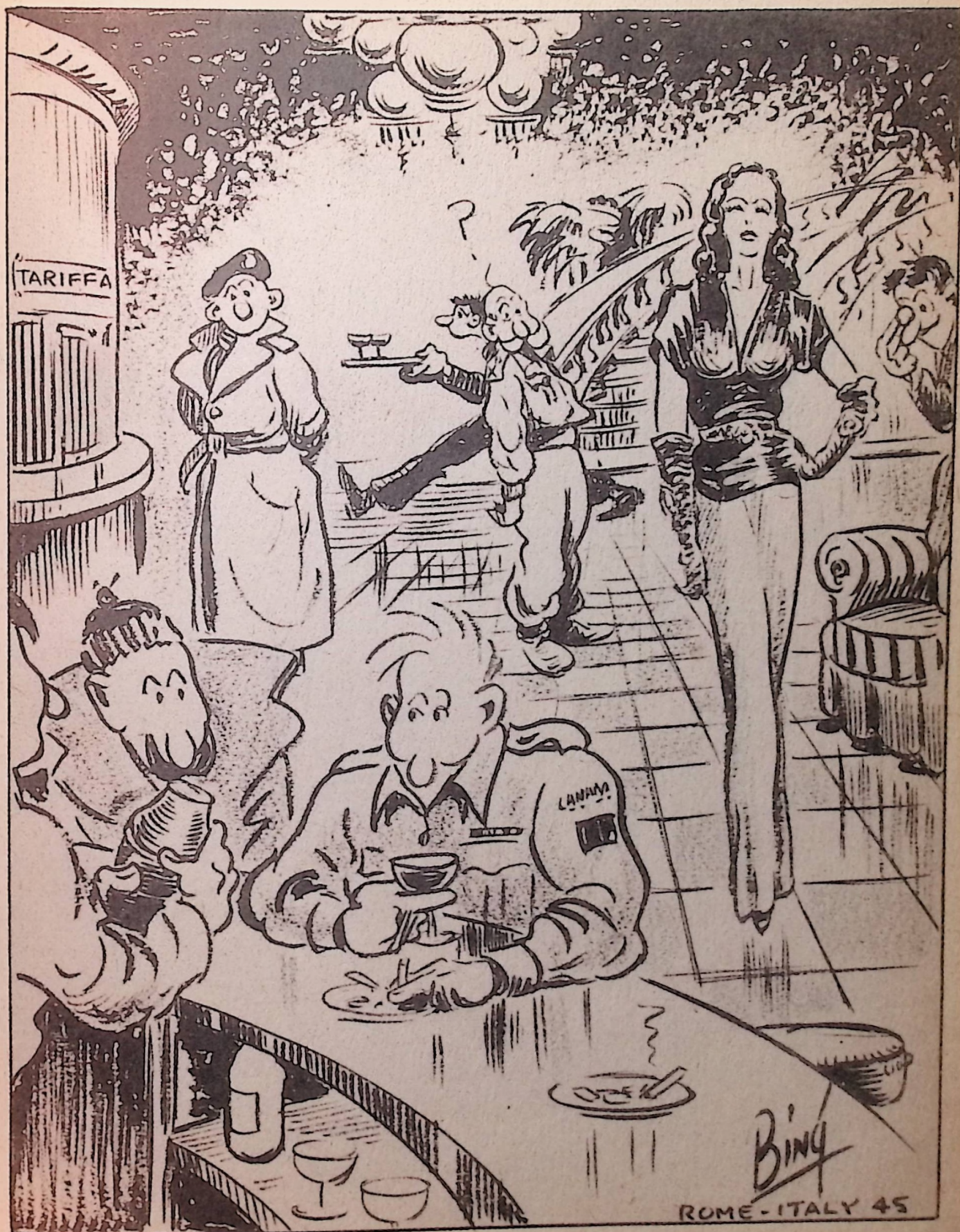
Now about these Italian girls, they were fillies of an entirely different stable (figures of speech will prove your downfall yet, warns the ever-cautious Herbie). The signorina of the land of mountains and fountains, mud and mules was every bit as friendly as the young ladies aforementioned, if not more so, but in this case it had nothing to do with accent. Usually such things as lire, bully beef, lire, chocolata, lire, pane, lire, farina, and lire become involved when boy (Canadian) met girl (Italian)..

For the purposes of this epistle, we will deal with the belles of Sicily and Italy as one and the same, just as if there was no such body of water as the Straits of Messina separating them. Which, incidentally leads one to note that those same straits are probably the closest a lot of Italian bodies have come to water in a long time.

Herbie reports his first association with the female species of Italian was 200 yards north of the Sicily beach, on which he had firmly planted the wet sole of an ammunition boot 20 minutes previously to inaugurate officially what was to become commonly known, in even the most polite circles, as the Allied thrust at the soft, underbelly of Europe. His story is that he noticed a line-up of soldiers outside a broken-down casa and these soldiers were all well armed with tins of bully beef, packages of hardtack and the like which a Sicilian gent at the door was accepting as payment for entrance.

Thinking that the building must be the local zoo and, interested in natural science, Herbie joined the queue, in due course presented his tin of bully beef and discovered,





"EVERYTHING AROUND HERE COSTS LIKE HELL."



to his dismay, that the Sicilian study of natural science is indeed basic.

And so we leave Sunny Sicily, with its tired Mt. Etna, its begging bambini, its barefoot human mine detectors (the ladies always precede the gentlemen on Sicilian roads, thank you), and move on to the delights of Southern Italy.

From a military standpoint, it appeared obvious that the early capture of the Port of Naples was imperative but before long, many a Canadian soldier who had the misfortune to visit this birthplace of three-colored ice cream began to doubt the wisdom of it all. Although the methodical German saw fit to leave in the city various and sundry demolition projects that were to fulminate with considerable effect in due course, it hardly seemed necessary, in view of the number of two-legged booby traps that cluttered up Via Roma and adjoining thoroughfares. And as if these booby traps were not sufficiently in evi-



**"NO SIGNORINA, THIS COLONEL  
McGUIRE YOU HAVE REFERENCE  
TO WAS CAPT. BRAIDWOOD'S  
BATMAN. THEY CHECKED OUT  
THIS MORNING!"**

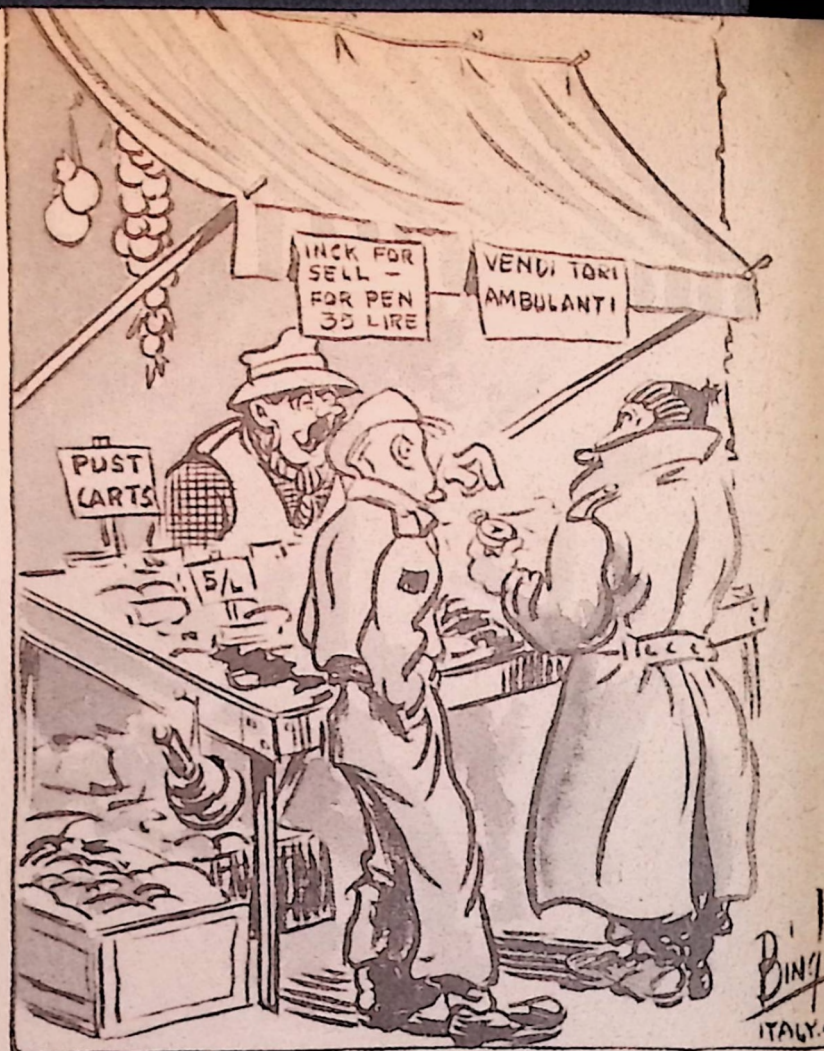




"AND HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN BRINGING YOUR LAUNDRY HERE?"



"DASSA SIXATEEN JEWELL,  
PUTTA DA LAS ONE EEN  
MYSELF!"



dence, there were guides who for a small stipend, sometimes known as a cut, would be only too glad to lead the tourist to their location and do everything but personally supervise the explosion.

It was not uncommon to have thrust in the general nasal area, a dinner menu which read something like this:

Egs  
Bifstake  
Chips  
Champane  
Signorina  
200 Lire

The thruster might be feeding a very small baby at the time but never let it be said that the Neopolitans allowed anything to interfere with business.

The situation was fraught with such ramifications that



"GO AHEAD PADRE. — EXPRESS  
YERSELF IT'LL DO YER GOOD!"



"WHAT ROAD?"



the medical authorities deemed it necessary to display at prominent intervals through the city one of the war's most unusual signs: "Beware Dangerous Type V.D." Up to then, nobody had thought of there being any other type.

Just nice clean kids.

As the Canadian soldier continued to look with considerable dismay on what the Italians had done to Italy, the more educated local yokels who sympathized with him continued to suggest it was very unusual weather for that time of year and he undoubtedly would find the climate and other things considerably improved as he journeyed north. The mere fact that something like 24 German divisions seemed to like Italy, to the constant bewilderment of the Eighth and Fifth armies, never fazed the locals. They were, without a doubt, the most optimistic people, when somebody else was doing the fighting, that the war revealed.

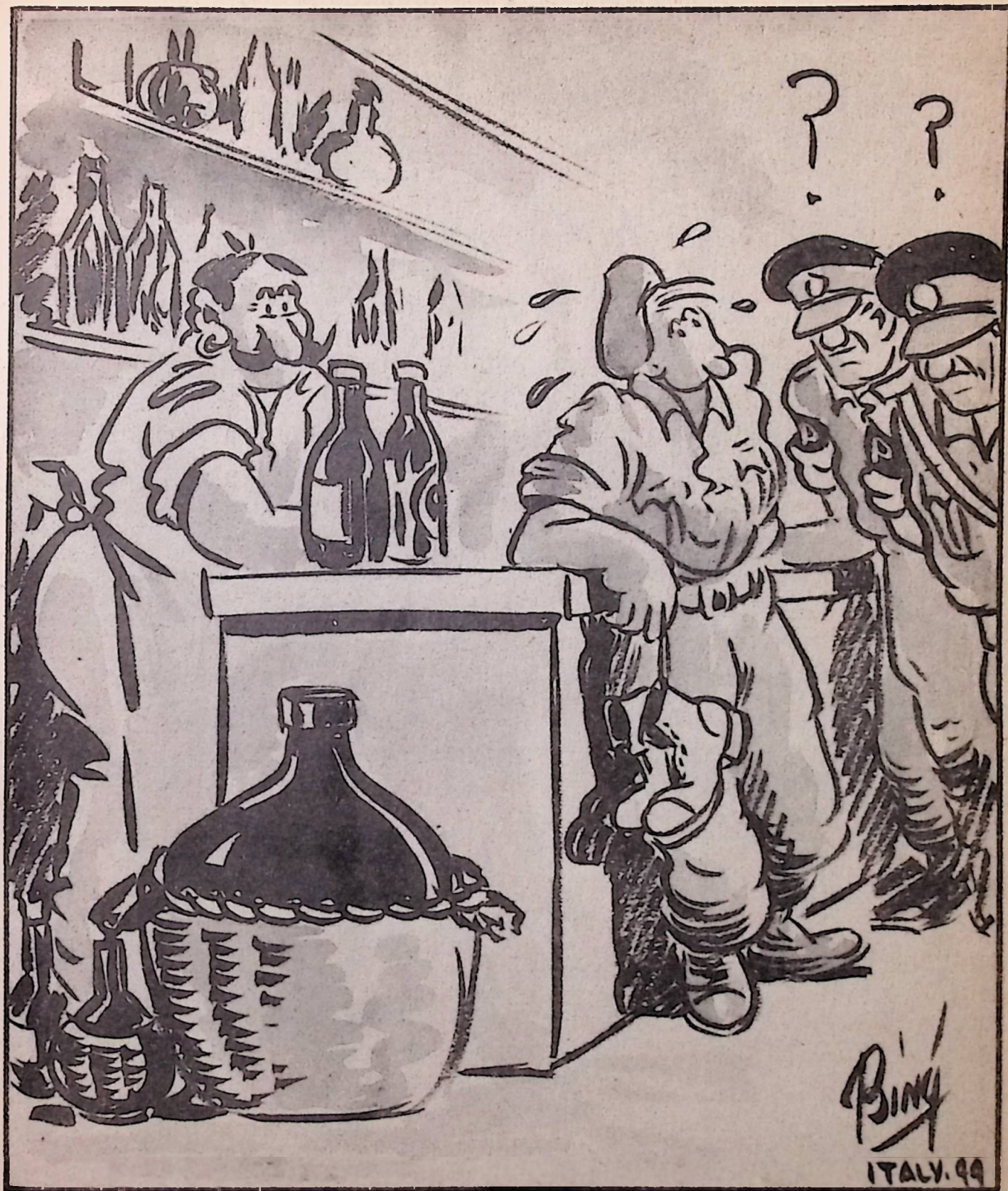
Howsomever, the passing of time did bring the Allies to Bella Roma and new interests. It is at this point that our agents become slightly unintelligible but we gather from the sounds, which seem faintly reminiscent of a wolf we once heard howling for its mate on Portage Avenue, that the beauties of Rome as described in the tourist books had not been over-rated.

Our agents even insisted that at least one Roman signorina had accepted an invitation to dinner in an Allied officers' mess and had shown up without her mother, father, brothers, sisters and second cousins, thrice removed. This was indeed an event worthy of note and indicated that the forecast of improved conditions was not without foundation after all.

Herbie says he heard of one signorina in Florence who refused to come at all but that we'd have to see.

But to get back to Rome, the feminine intelligentsia soon learned such friendly terms of greeting as "Hullo, Babee,"





"I THOUGHT PERHAPS HE REPAIRED BOOTS!"



the difference between Canadian and Limey cigarettes, how to make a fall coat out of an army blanket and, from all reports, there was considerable in the way of eating, drinking, making of merry and letting of joy be unconfined. The commercial touch was still there but at least they swabbed your arm before applying the needle.

From Rome, our agents moved to Florence seeking an interview with Herbie's stubborn signorina and that's the last we seem to have in the Italian file which is probably just as well. She must have really been stubborn.

\* \* \* \*

The final word we had from those unfettered operators, vested with the responsibility of scouting the talent in France, came from Paris via army signals and, when the code was unscrambled, read succinctly: "Having a wonderful time, wish you were here." Ah, c'est la guerre, toujours l'amour, vive la France, vive les Canadiens, the mademoiselle she's not so dumb.

\* \* \* \*



**"FORGET THE 'MILLE GRAZIE' STUFF — A SALUTE IS SUFFICIENT!"**









**"AN' DON'T GIVE ME THAT OLD  
GAG ABOUT TERMITES EITHER."**

At least the gents who went to the land of Eiffel Tower hair-dos had the decency to make a report, burdened with enthusiasm as it was. Records at Acton inform us sadly that our agents who went on tour in Belgium have been missing since the fall of '44. Records presume several interesting developments but don't like to come right out with it.

Never could figure out how to say no in Flemish.

\* \* \* \*

And so we arrive in Holland, bloody but unbowed, ready to face what may come, knowing the product is hardly worth the price but still . . .

The question of what little Dutch girls are made of appears, at the outset, a trifle difficult to answer. Some claim there are no Dutch girls to speak of in South Holland. Some claim there are no Dutch girls in South Holland. Some refuse to discuss the issue of South Holland at all. Herbie insists he saw a girl in South Holland once but



REMEMBER THAT LITTLE THUD  
WE HEARD LAS' NIGHT?"



"MUST BE PURTY TOUGH ON  
THE LADS IN HOLLAND, ALL  
THEY'VE GOT TO PUT IN THEIR  
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admits her shoes were in the way and he couldn't get a very good look at her.

Which all leads to the conclusion that the South may be all right for some but we'll go West. The Canadian entry into West Holland to liberate such cities as Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague was indeed an auspicious occasion. No holds were barred. Everyone showed a keen sense of appreciation of the moment. The formality of introductions was waived and those Canadian soldiers who were in a position to handle such a situation took it up from there.

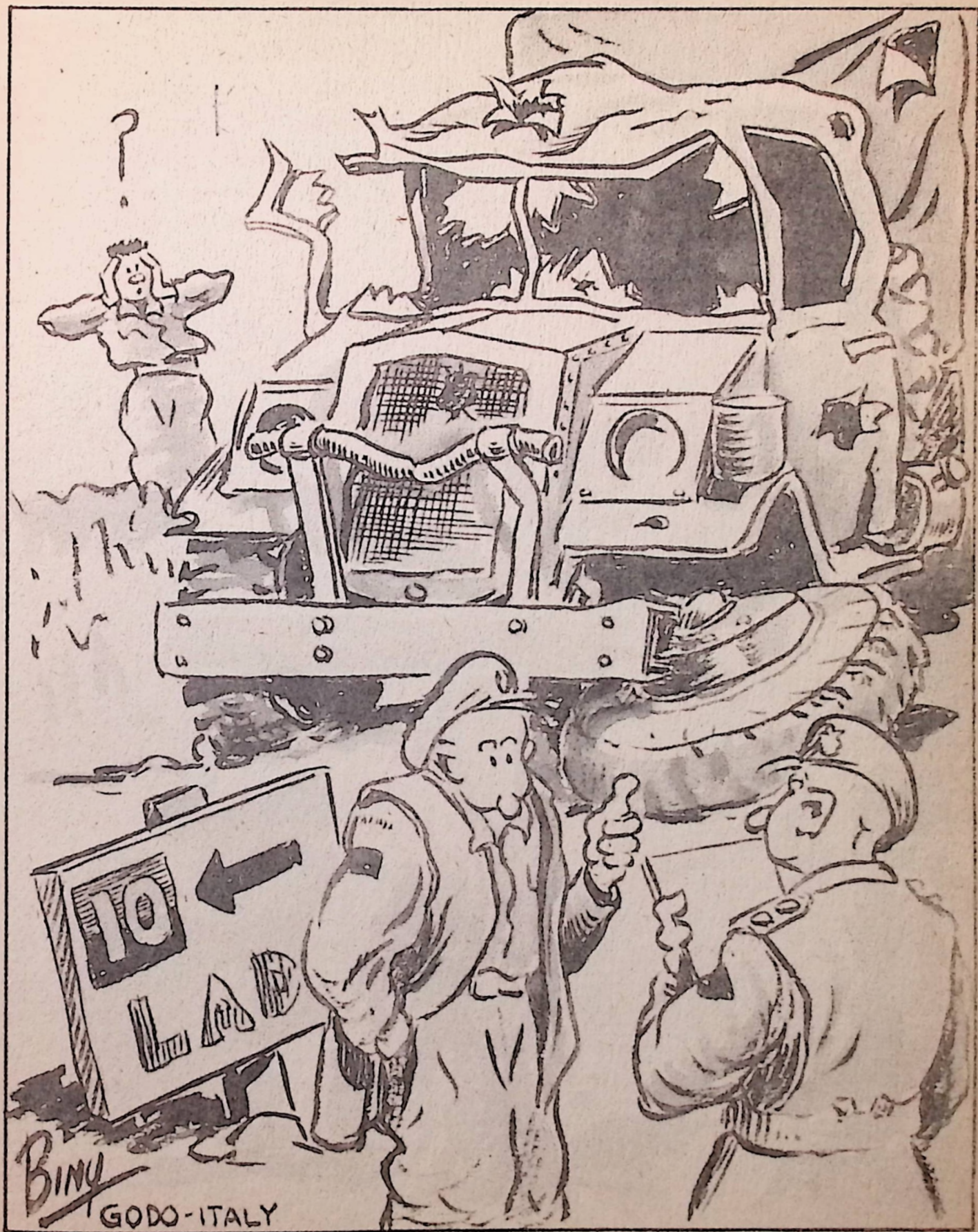
Many Dutch girls proved so round, so firm, so fully packed, so free and easy on the draw . . . this, despite five years of German occupation, showed real fortitude. Language differences presented no barrier as a goodly number of Canadian soldiers soon learned how to say *nix in the winkel*, *alles in the kellar* and other such important observations. New friendships grew and flourished to such a degree that the young men who operate the windmills were given to grinding their teeth in their sleep and the noise in the night was a disturbing thing to hear.

Some even dared to suggest the popularity of Canadian soldiers in certain areas of the Netherlands was on the wane, but it was said to have been said at Canadian Army headquarters that this was not so and everybody was, therefore, happy all over again. Particularly the *meijses* (young ladies, to those who haven't been there). They hadn't believed it anyway.

One feature Canadian soldiers deemed highly commendable, was the evident devotion of the Dutch lassies to soap. They'd do almost anything for soap. And what's more, they'd use it after they got it. This would undoubtedly shock the Italian girls, if they knew it, into believing there was no black market in Holland, which would be a very silly thing to believe.

"The whole trouble", comments Herbie with a degree





"NO, NOT A TOTAL WRECK SIR, THE HORN STILL WORKS."



of insight hitherto veiled, "was that the average Dutch girl had been (sigh) repressed." "Trouble", he calls it.

If the Dutch girls had been repressed, many a Canadian who had ideas about a remedy for the repression were victims of supression by the nasty old brass. Such practices as conveying a female from here to there in an army vehicle were frowned on for no little time in higher military circles. And it was no small problem for soldiers to be hosts to the meijses for fun and games in whatever humble abode they managed to requisition.

The story is told, however, of a group of enterprising young officers in a tank regiment who were not to be thwarted in their program of entertainment. The wine and song were in surplus, they could not go unshared. But the roadblocks were many, the provost alert. They were even checking bulldozers.

Now the medical officer of the unit was a very understanding gentleman, particularly after he had managed to

**"THINK THE NAVY OTTA TAKE  
OVER FROM HERE?"**







"HOW'S IT TASTE SMITTY?"





*"PERMIT ME ONE SWIFT KICK.  
I USED TO BE HIS BATMAN."*

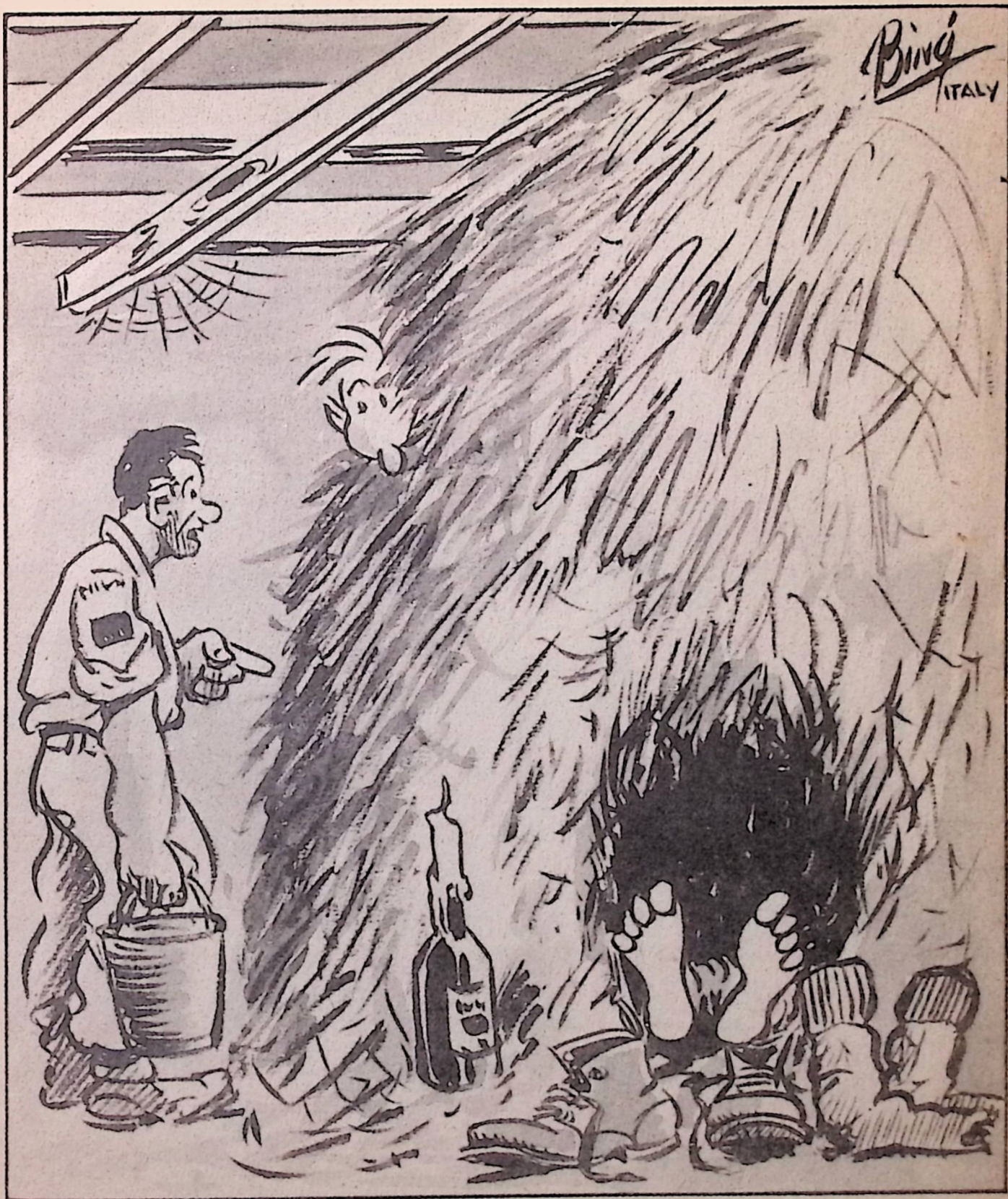
inhale a couple of 75's with Alexanders for chasers, or vice versa. The boys bethought themselves of the ambulance, extracted the key to the steering wheel padlock from the prostrate pocket of the prostrate MO, slipped the medical orderly an enema and headed for the nearby town. Loaded to the Red Crosses with damsels, they were returning in glee to their posh pup tent when, much to their consternation, they were given the old "halt-who-goes-there" by a provost who was on point duty like an Irish setter.

The subaltern, retaining the reputation for quick thinking that had won him a mention in several of his own despatches, said imperiously to this effect:

"One side, corporal, the colonel has been dangerously hurt and we are rushing him to the nearest blood plasma unit."

The corporal was duly impressed, made with an up-2-3-down and, in a flurry of white web, waved the ambulance





" 'ATS M'GUIRE I CAN TELL BY HIS SOCKS."



on. And so there was much in the way of whoopin' and hollerin' and soft-shoe dancin', not to mention heel-hangin' from the chandelier until long past curfew. But the hour of parting came and, by that time, the young quick-thinking subaltern was about as sharp as Aunt Maggie's hot-water bottle. But, with devotion to duty, he crawled on his hands and knees to the ambulance and hoisted his weary frame into the front seat. All stretchers in the ambulance were duly occupied and the parties steered for home.

Now the provost corporal was a very sympathetic soul, an oddity in itself as no provost corporal had ever been known to be sympathetic before, let alone have a soul. Anyhow, he had been thinking and worrying about the poor colonel who had been dangerously hurt and, when he gave the halt-who-goes-there sign to a vehicle and discovered it to be the self-same ambulance returning from its mission of mercy, he made bold to inquire:



**"FOR THE FIRST TIME IN M'LIFE  
I ENVY MY FEET, THEY'RE  
ASLEEP!"**



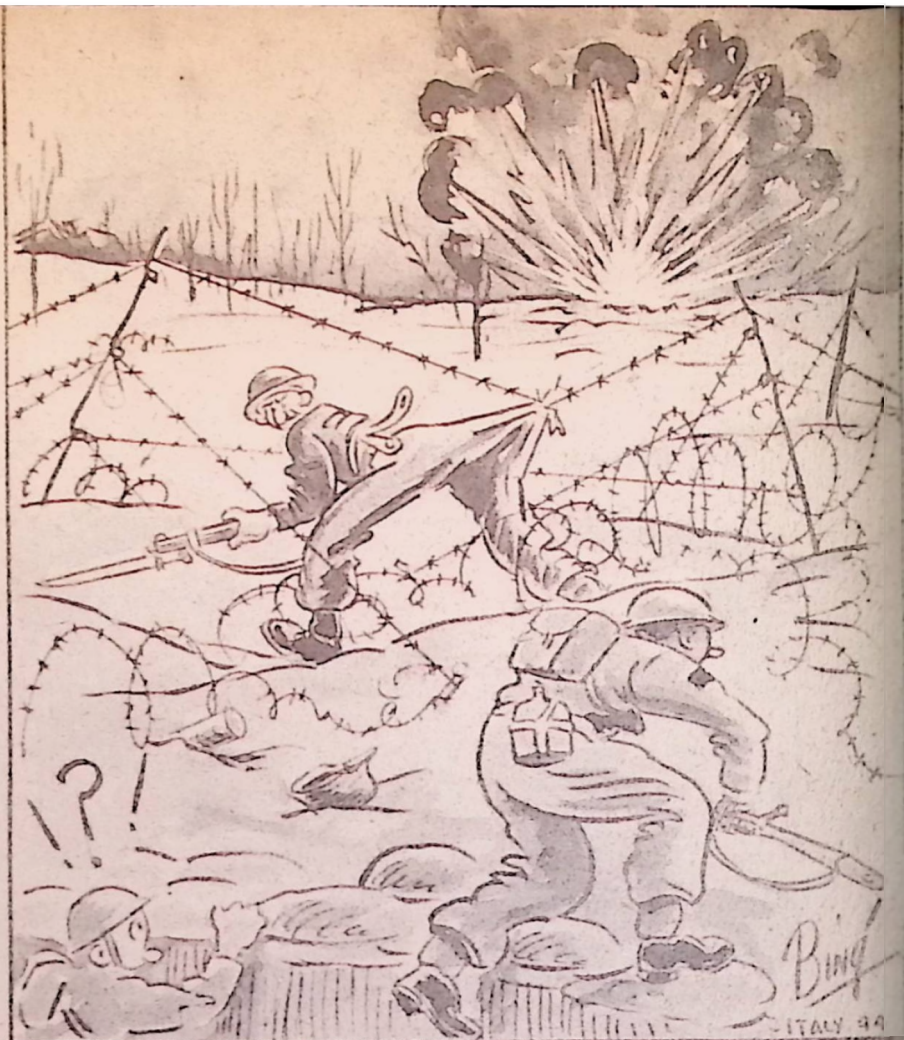
**"WILL YOU GUYS STOP STICKIN'  
YER CHEWIN' GUM UNDER THE  
TABLE!"**



**"SO I SEZ — LISTEN, YOU BIG  
STIFF, IF YA DON'T PIPE DOWN  
SOMEBODY'S GONNA GET A  
PUNCH IN THE NOSE!"**



**"DON'T STAND THERE LIKE A  
GOON . . . DO SOMETHING!"**



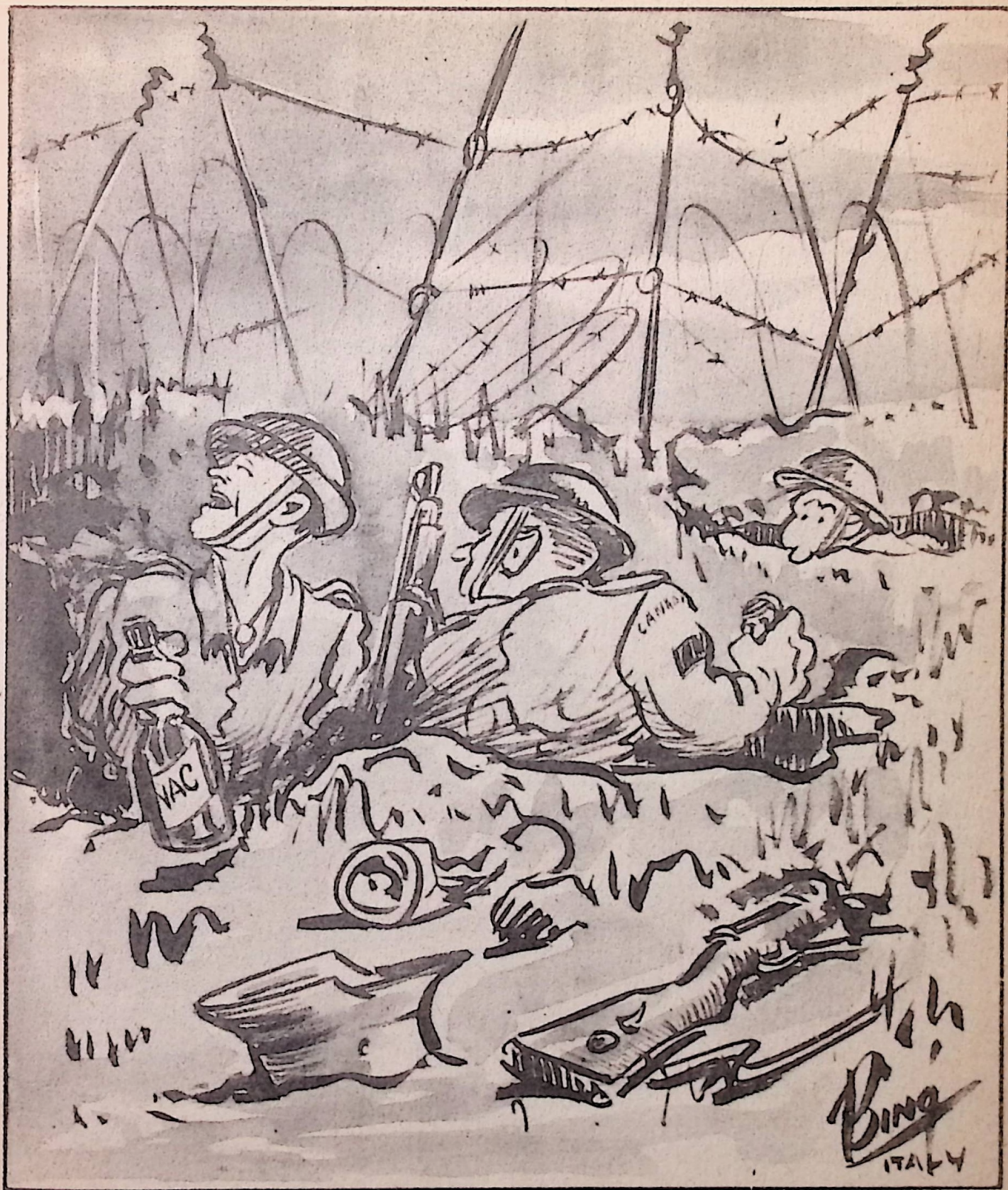
"How's the colonel, sir? Is he going to be all right?"

The ex-quick-thinking subaltern, startled by this interruption, muttered something that sounded like: "Ug, whoomph, slag, unh." The provost corporal was understandably baffled by all this and politely repeated his polite queries. The subaltern, by this time, was no little annoyed by such persistence and demanded: "What colonel? What the hell are you talking about?"

So the next (groan) day, there was a request for several dazed subalterns to convene with the major at squadron HQ and the major proceeded to read the riot act, the mutiny act and then discuss in extremely derogatory terms the practice of transporting female civilians in military vehicles, particularly ambulances, and anyway the colonel didn't like this story they told the provost because he figured it might have been wishful thinking.

If the subalterns were not noticeably impressed by the major's condemnation, it was only because of another





"THINK I'LL HAVE M'LUNCH. WHO'S GOT A CORK-SCREW?"



story that goes like this:

There was a major in a tank regiment and he was openly disgruntled when he found out he had arrived at the mess too late to cut in on an arrangement whereby certain officers would bring their lady friends to a party by means of an ambulance. So he climbed into his Sherman tank, 17-pounder and all, and roared into the nearby town, dropped his lady friend down the hatch and took off for the scene of festivities.

Strangely enough, he met the very same alert, sympathetic provost and the major said:

"Have you seen any tanks from my squadron go by here lately?"

And the provost, a trifle bewildered as is normal with provosts, said he hadn't seen any tanks of any squadron go by for three hours.

And the major said: "Gawd, I must be farther behind them than I thought," and roared on.

During the course of the evening, the major fell victim to the 75 and Alexander combination that kayoed the M.O. and was unable to take a further interest in proceedings. So it was well known to all concerned that none other than his lady friend occupied one of the stretchers in the ambulance on the return trip.

So it was understandable if the subalterns did not brood too long over the business, particularly when the bar opened again at 1100 hours.

\* \* \* \*

We trust this story will serve to confirm the oft-repeated statement that Canadian initiative and ability to improvise on the battlefield were very great indeed. But, in case there be any misunderstanding, it should be stated that any heel-hangin' from the chandelier was not done by the Dutch girls. They said it always made them dizzy.

\* \* \* \*

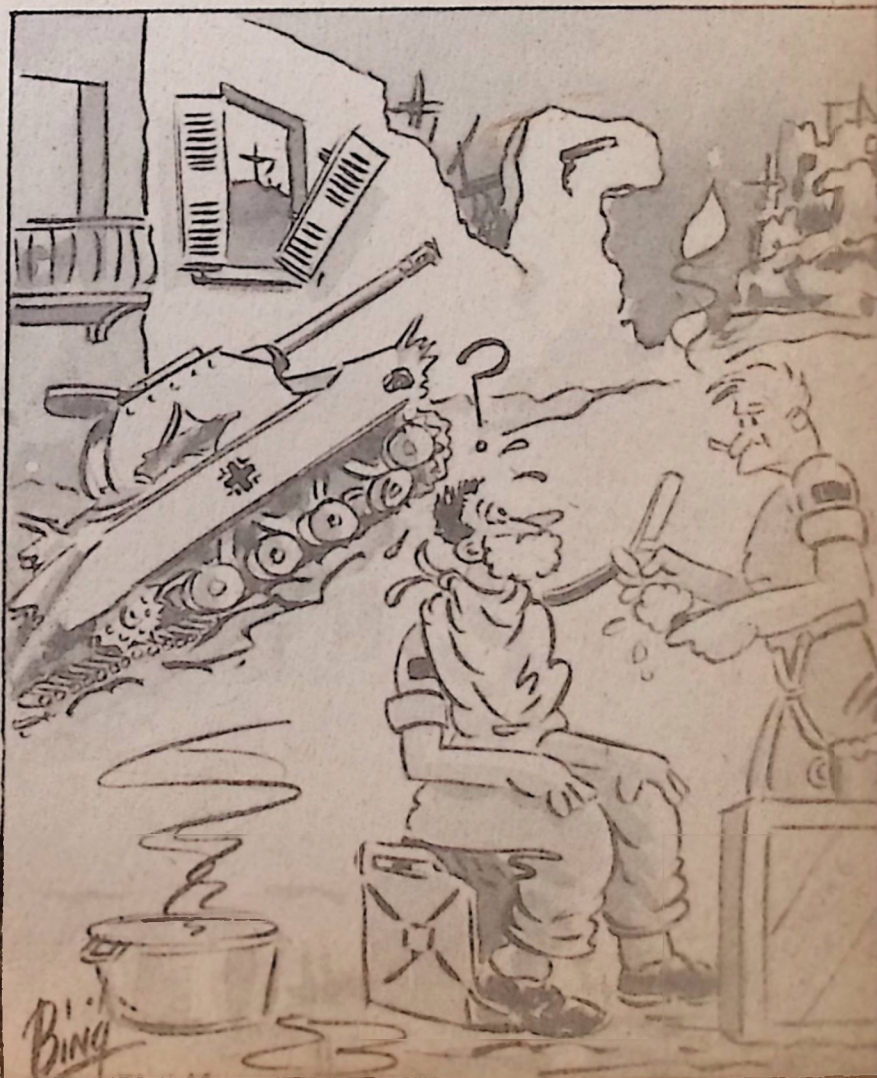
Probably just in time, we turn to the frauleins, our





"FOUR POUCHES, AMMUNITION;  
TEN HELMETS, STEEL; SIX  
KNIVES, CLASP; TWO PAIRS  
BOOTS, ANKLE; RIGHT AWAY  
HEAVENS FOR THE SAKE OF!"

"THEY SAY I'M NEUROTIC,  
'CAUSE EVERY ONCE'N AWHILE  
N GET TH' SHAKES."





backs to them we'd have you believe. There was a period when it was regarded in very official quarters as very improper to even pass the time of day, not to speak of the night, with the female German or any other kind of German. So for a spell, little was known about this brand of the species except that one sergeant got three years for spending three nights with one, which in itself was inclined to be discouraging.

However, it became obvious before long that Allied soldiers could not be denied the pleasure of discussing the world series, Blackwood and Culbertson, how to make an eight the hard way, and other such world issues with the children of the defeated Reich. Just when a child stopped being a child and became a subject of interest apparently was left to individual discretion. This immediately revealed an alarming lack of discretion on the part of more than a few occupiers and prompted further relaxation of the rules concerning chitting and chatting and thising

**"DON'T TELL ME YOU LEFT THE  
TAP RUNNING!"**

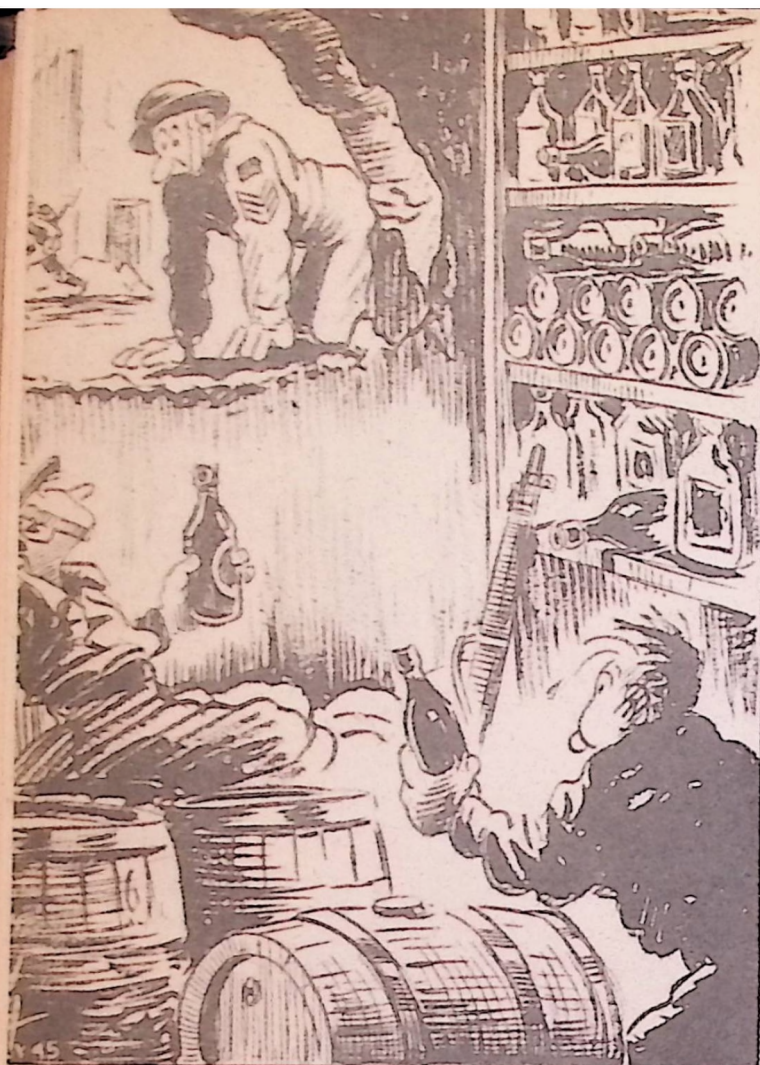






"ITS THEM GRAPE NUTS WE ATE, SIR. WE'VE SINCE BEEN TOLD IT WAS DEHYDRATED MUTTON!!!"





*"WHAT D'YA MEAN — LET'S  
GO!"*

and thating with German civilians.

This you'd think, would have produced voluminous reports from our agents concerning the frauleins but not on their lives. Nary a man would admit even giving one of Hitler's feminine heilers a small hello. One of these negative returns did carry an appendage to the effect that peroxide wasn't bringing a thing on the German black market which may or may not be significant.

Herbie proved of little help. The boys in the backroom reported he took one look at the document providing a choice of going to the Pacific, going home or joining the occupation force, muttered something very uncomplimentary to the higher-paid help for thinking there'd be any doubt in the matter, and marked the occupation force eighth.

So it seems we never will get to know what little frauleins are made of, but we're pretty sure it's not very nice anyway.





**RUSH! RUSH! ALWAYS IN A HURRY, SEE WOT IT GOT US THIS TIME!**



### III

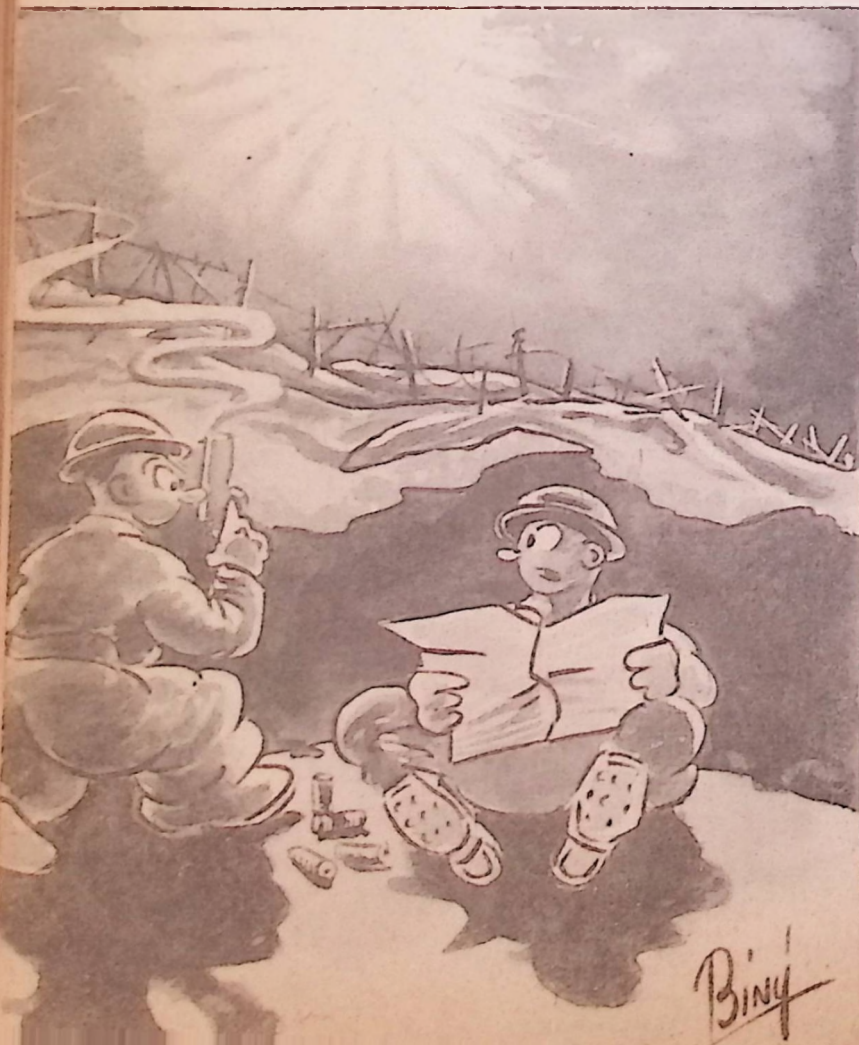
#### The Root Of All . . .

*or*

#### If It Glitters, It Ain't Gulden

TO those who managed to save enough money overseas to buy a town house, country estate, put their kids through college and pay for a new set of tires, our congratulations to them, the crooks. To those who are still having trouble explaining what they did with ALL that money overseas, our deepest and most sincere sympathy. We unfortunately find ourselves in the latter category and, brother, is isn't a happy one.

However, we feel any discussion of the difficulties of high finance in the expensive existence of the average soldier may be better handled without benefit of personal



**"FIRE ONE MORE, I'VE ANOTHER  
PARAGRAPH T'READ."**

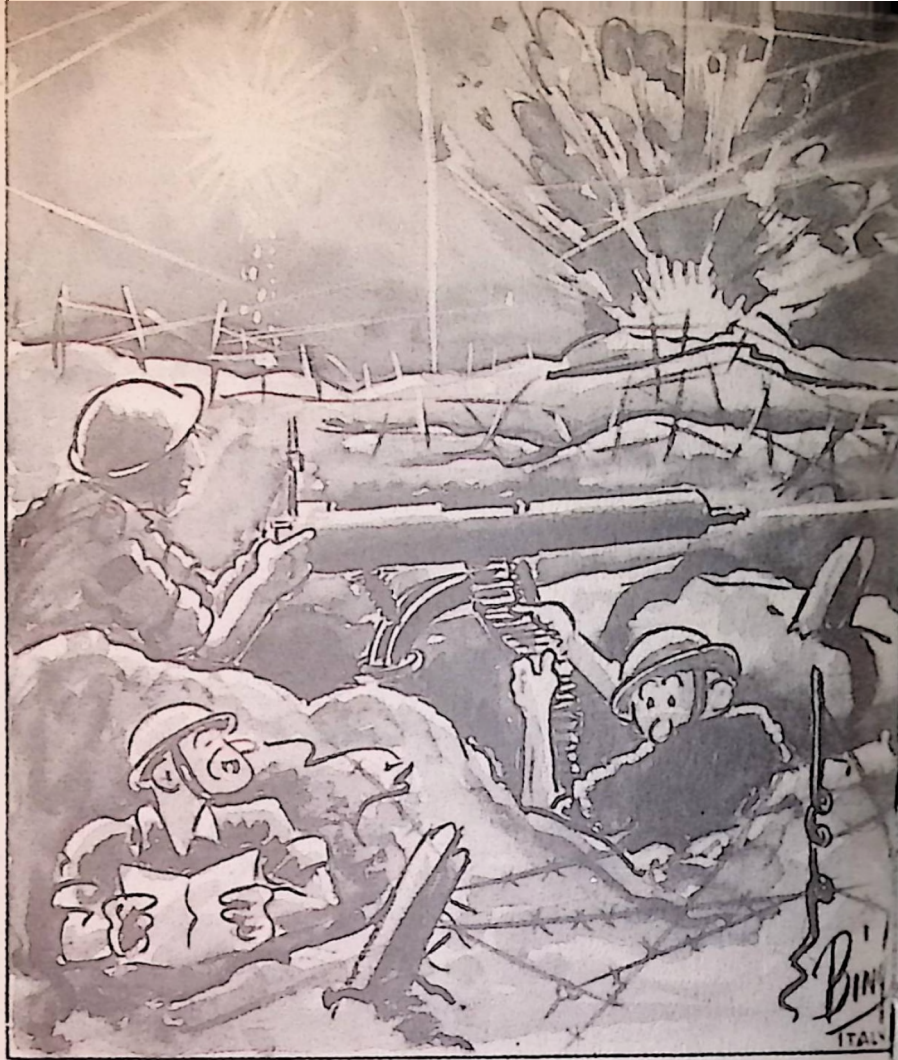




**"HANG ON TO THE CAT, WE'LL TEST THIS ONE NEXT."**



*"SHE SAYS HERE, THE VICTORIA  
DAY FIREWORKS WERE SIMPLY  
MARVELLOUS, TOO BAD YOU  
MISSED IT."*



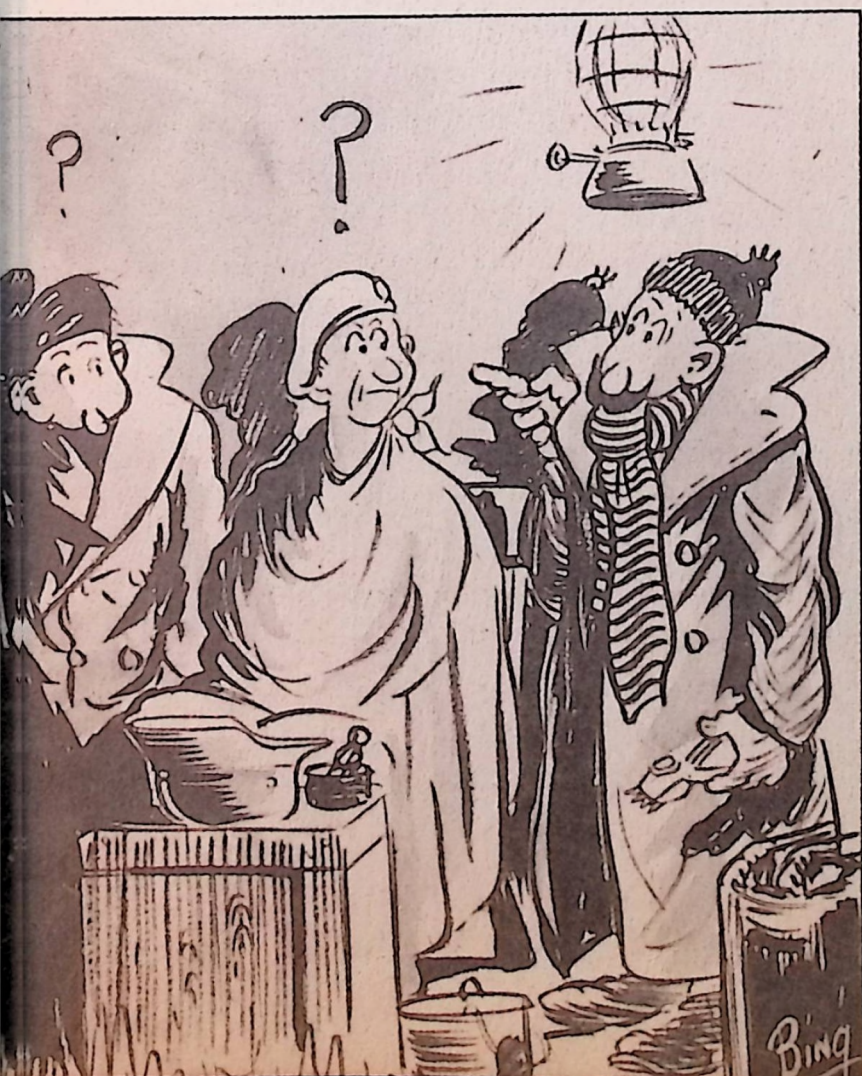
experience, and trust the observations submitted on what happened to that \$1.50 or more per diem will be accepted as purely objective reporting, without kicking the kitty either way.

Some citizens were known to have expressed the view, during the painful military process recently concluded, that the Canadian soldier was an underpaid operator. This, it safely may be noted, met with considerable in the way of commendation in what were then Europe's most select social circles, and concern was evident that these citizens were not members of the cabinet. Many a hitherto upright, honest young man was touched by this show of sympathy to such an extent that he parted with his last blanket in order to buy sufficient appropriate liquid to drink a toast to these thoughtful citizens.

In dealing with finance, one obviously must strive to strike a balance but, as guilty thoughts of the buckshee web brace held out on the QM stores and the gas respirator



"D'YA WANT IT CUT OR JUST  
THE OIL CHANGED!"



"FER ANOTHER 10 LIRE I'LL CUT  
YER HAIR WITH YER HAT OFF!"



pitched in an Amsterdam canal belabor our conscience, we can't help but view it as an almost impossible proposition. However, we've got to start somewhere, so let's have a slight single in the Horse and Dolphin—which knew well the financial condition of many a Canadian—and go on from there.

Early arrivals in England, warriors who were to become the point of that dagger aimed so long at the heart of Berlin, found that currency of the Isles was inclined to be a trifle involved. It was rumored before long that certain merchants and pubkeepers in Aldershot were charging too high a fee for a course of instruction in the proper relationship of pounds, shillings and pence. The habit of thrusting a handful of coins in the general direction of a barmaid, for extraction of the amount necessary, was halted forthwith after one lad was admitted to No. 1 General hospital with a broken wrist. He said Daisy thought he had another sixpence up his sleeve.

Soon the ever-increasing throng of Canadian tourists discovered the so-called experts who had come to the astounding conclusion that one (1) pound was worth \$4.47, were very thoughtless characters who probably couldn't add one and one and get a decent double. Men of the mobile laundries were starting to take in the pubkeeper's washing. The ordnance johnnies were apprenticing themselves to the village smithy. Civilian cars started to pop up on the base workshop assembly lines. Officers were going back to Canada on instructional tours because of overdrafts. Unit barbers cut off all credit. It was even whispered around that a general was dipping into his capital. Things were in a helluva state.

But little did the men of our fair Dominion know that the worst was still to come. The natives of Texas and the rest of the Gem of the Ocean, laden down with nylons, lipstick, cartons of Chelseas and cash, started to land and quickly consolidate. Not only was this cash in more





"GUESS WHAT HAPPENED SIR!"



abundance than the locals (both definitions) had seen in a long fortnite but only about \$4 of same was required to coax from the Treasury one austerity-type pound. Within a week, four barmaids in the Park Lane Hotel were in padded cells, diagnosis—doubleitis. The publicans were threatening to take the gentle out of "Time, Gentlemen, Please." There was talk that one American unit was requisitioning Claridge's as an officers' mess. The bottle clubs were adding a 25-shilling "welcome to American troops" charge.

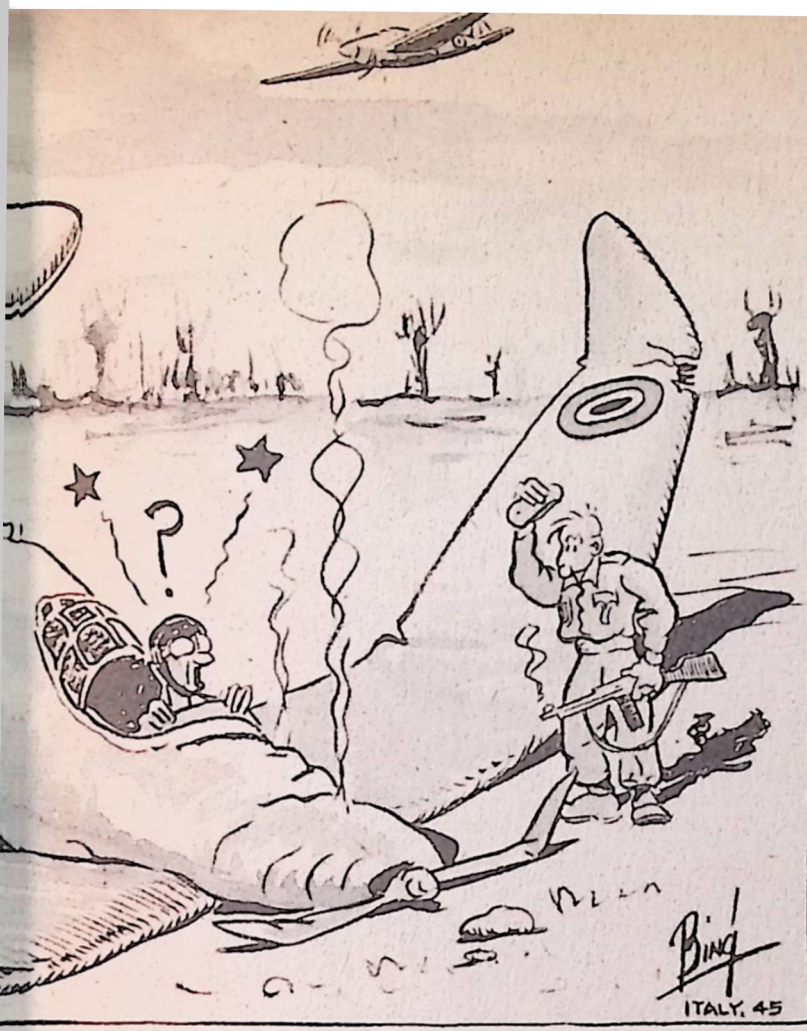
It was not long before inflation had reared its ugly head so high it could look with condescension on Big Ben.

A goodly number of free-spending Canadians strove mightily to meet this challenge. Some went to the dogs at White City. Some went to push-ha'penny night school. Some were even silly enough to write home for money.

It must be confessed, however, that literally thousands were just about ready to yell "uncle"—the banks were getting very tough indeed and the publicans' cuffs badly pencil-marked—when the War Office stepped in and sent them to Sicily. It has generally been thought up to now that the reason Canadian troops took part in the invasion of Sicily was to fight. This, then, for absolutely the first time and undoubtedly the last, is an exposé of the real cause for the move. Canadian morale in England was sinking fast. They couldn't stand the spending pace. The demands were proving too great. They had to get away from it all.

Having seen youths, filled with the vibrancy of a battle-drill course, turn into old men overnight in the Lord High Admiral, the Haymarket Club and such places, the master in charge of paymasters took a drastic step and ordered the pay of all Canadian troops in the Mediterranean limited to a certain small handout per month. So successful did this action prove and so happy were the





**"SORRY SIR! — A BIT OF OVER  
ANXIETY AND MISTAKEN  
IDENTITY!"**

**"GETTIN' MONOTONOUS AINT IT!  
THIS RAT - TAT - TAT - TAT."**





directors of the Bank of Montreal over the sudden return to solvency of many of their clients, another Canadian division with corps troops and everything was sent out to the Med in less than six months.

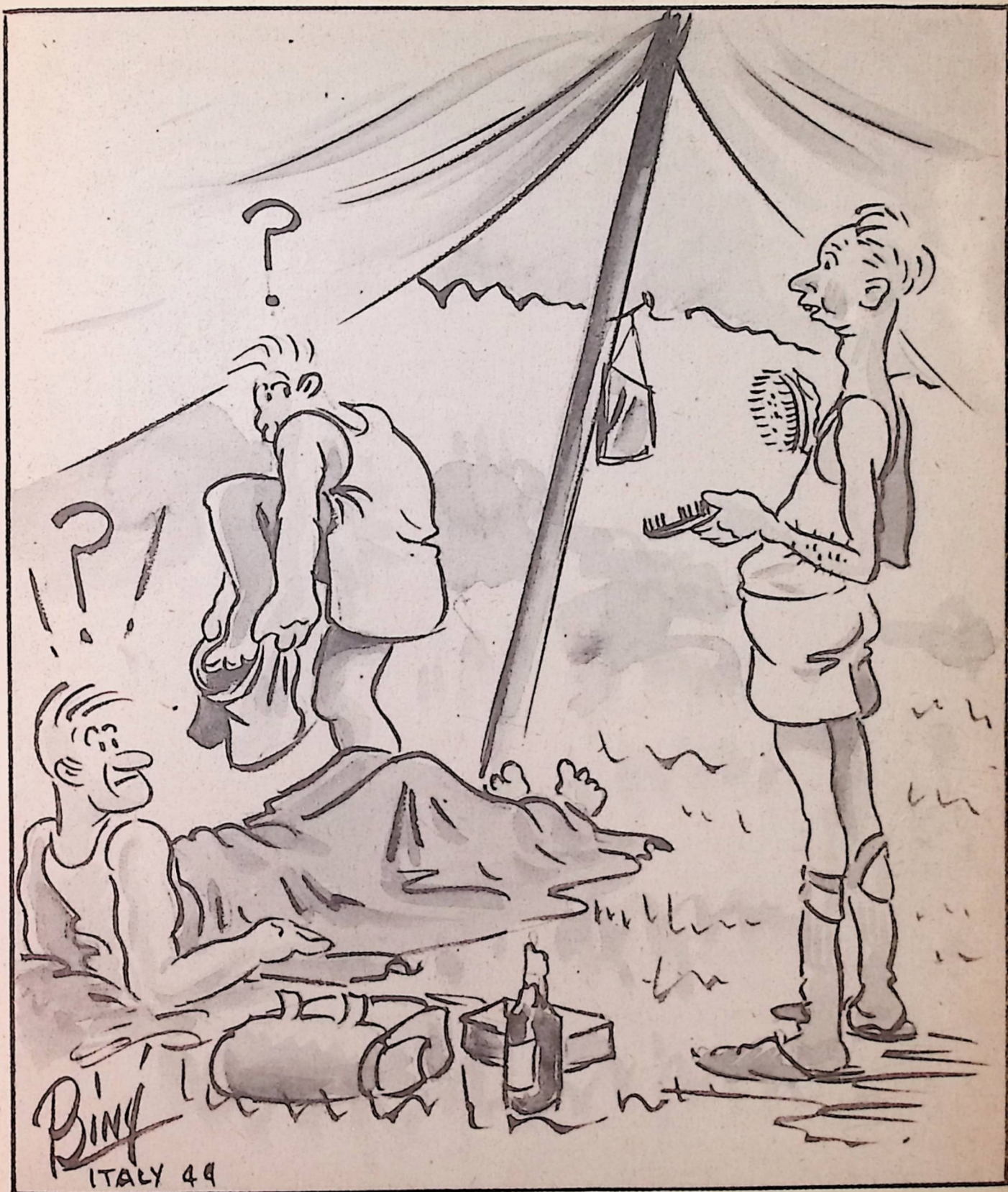
Thus, for the first time in history, a Canadian corps went into action with bulging paybooks and beautiful bank balances. A high-ranking German officer confided later his opinion that it was the turning point of the war.

While the knowledge that the future carried a promise of considerable collateral tended to produce a peace of mind neignoring on the smug, the lack of anything sizeable in the way of immediate cash was oft-times frustrating. The amount of \$4.47 still produced only one pound Sterling which only produced 400 lire Italian which didn't produce much. The fact that even a blind Italian before long could tell a "V" cigarette butt at 20 paces was rather discouraging at the outset, but the market held up well for the boys whose boots and blankets



**"WOTTA LOVELY PARCEL! —  
OLIVES, CORNED BEEF, SOYA  
LINKS, HERRING, FIGS, WOT! —  
NO DEHYDRATED MUTTON?"**

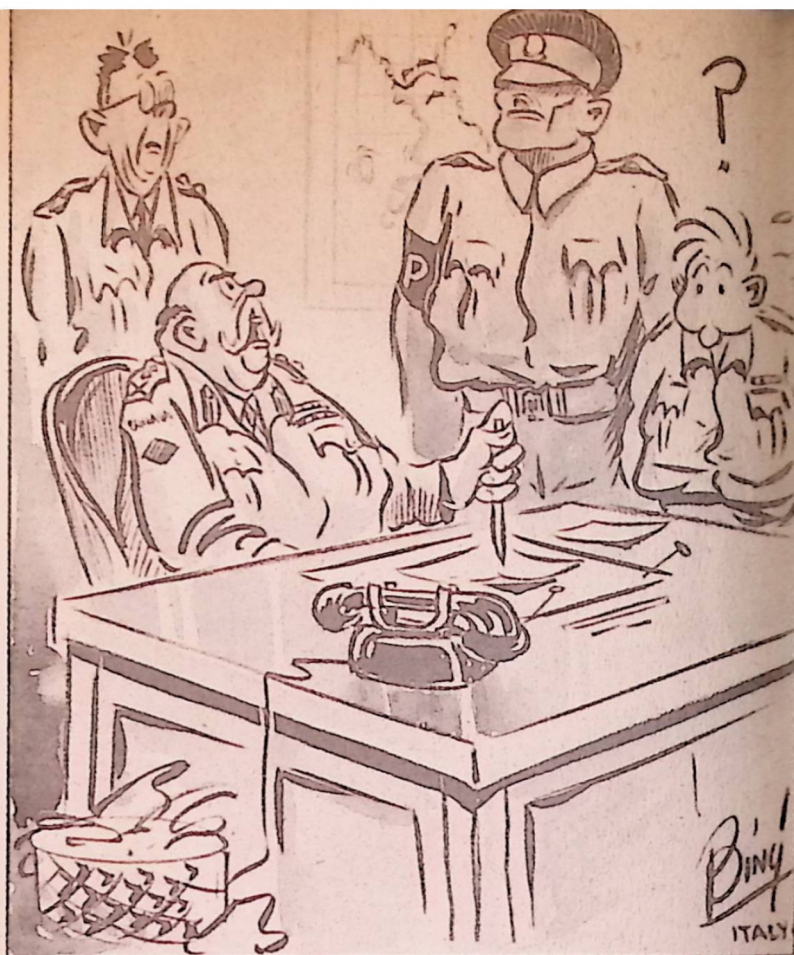




"NO VINO, NO SMOKIN', AND NO DAMES, DATS WOT KEEPS ME  
IN GOOD SHAPE."



*"IN FUTURE, YOUNG MAN YOU'LL REFER TO THEM AS COLONEL SO AND SO, OR MAJOR SO AND SO, AND NOT AS THE HIGH PRICED HELP!"*



mysteriously became battle casualties.

Some of the fraternity were inclined to scoff at the boot-and-blanket business, claiming it lacked imagination. One even went so far as to requisition all sewing machines immediately on arrival in a town, then rent them back to the local populace for a nominal fee. This ingenuity was paying large dividends until the Ities formed a dress-makers' union, went on strike and used the town major for an arbitration board. The guy's wife was still wondering last Christmas why the army kept him overseas, with all his points and all.

Which would almost seem to indicate that crime does not pay, except that we are told of a batman who never drew even a breath of pay all the time he was overseas, which was more than five years, which certainly could be termed the neatest trick of any one of those five.

It was said at one stage that drivers were becoming the wealthiest characters in Italy and we immediately des-





"STINKS, DON'T IT!"





**"HE SEZ HE'S GOT THE MINE  
PROBLEM BEAT!"**

patched one of our ace investigators to disprove this fallacious report. He returned from Rimini with the following:

"I had a hard time tracking 'em down. They seemed to be busy day and night—hard-workin' guys, those drivers. But I drops into a place where there are five or six of them on their hands and knees in a circle, bouncing some little cubes with black dots on 'em up against a board. There is a goodly amount of moola in evidence and the hollerin' is somethin' to hear. I says to myself maybe this is a good place to find out how much these guys got in the sock, so I stay.

"While one guy is rubbing those little cubes on the seat of his battledress and addressing them in pleading tones, I take advantage of the comparative lull to make a quick count of the pile in the centre. There is something like 100,000 lire to be seen and even I know that's worth more than 1,000 bucks in the open market.



BING  
ITALY



! !! !!!



"This guy with the dice is apparently fortunate enough to own all this and how he got it I intend to give considerable study to. Anyway he says, matter-of-fact like:

"'There's a hundred thousand open.'

"And the guy to his right says, just as matter-of-fact like:

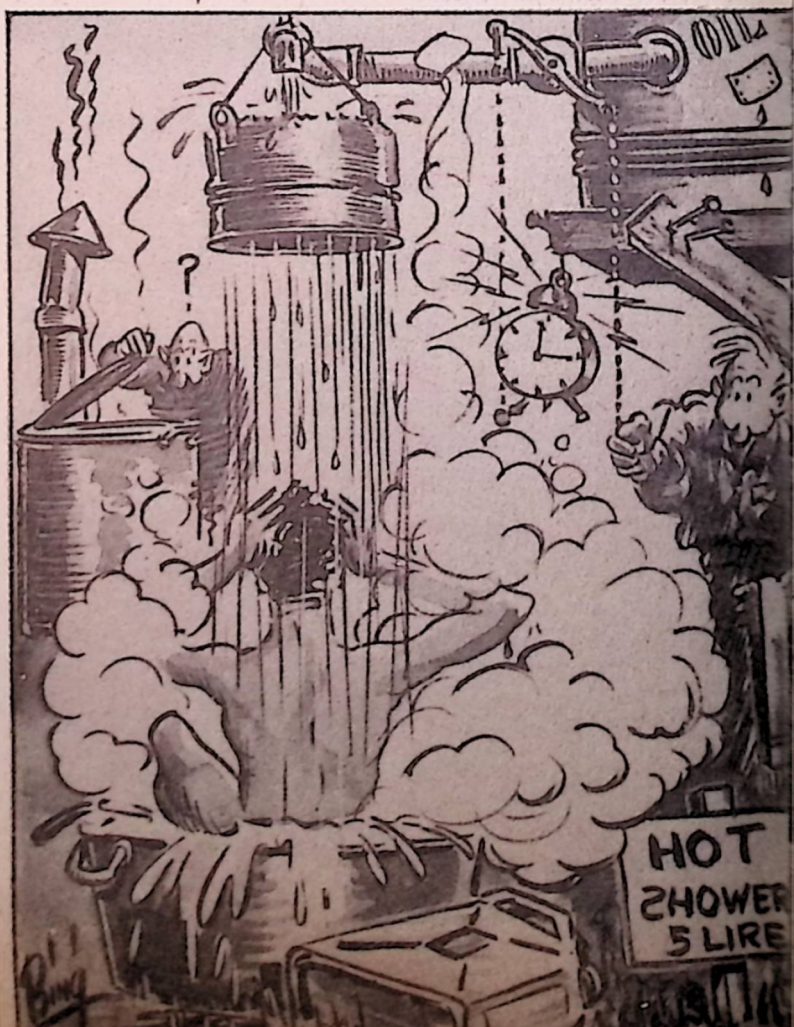
"'Covered.'"

We knew it wasn't true about those drivers.

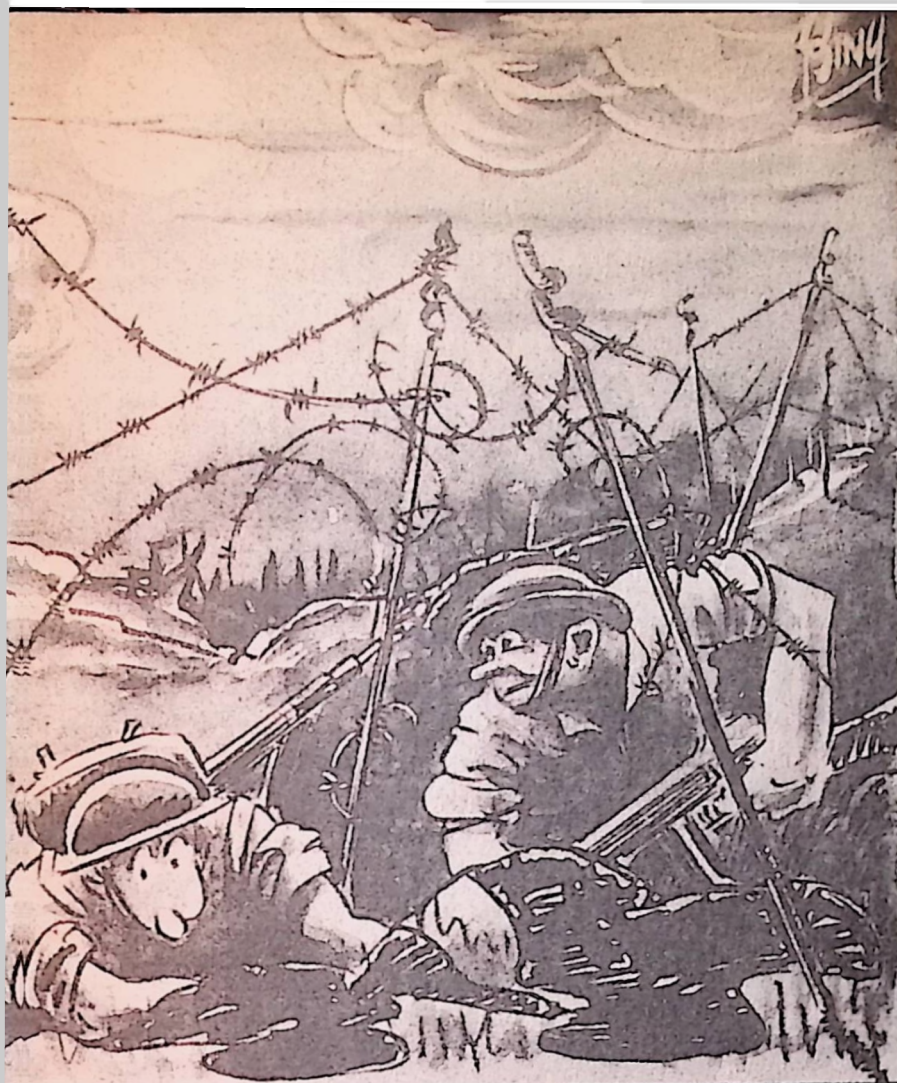
\* \* \* \*

Yes, there were certain ways and means of bolstering the bankroll in Italy but somehow or other, with the price of Strega what it was, nobody seemed to have enough to buy the nice new, crated ready-for-shipment, Focke-Wulf which the Ities had for sale in the Naples black market. We had little sympathy, however, for the officer who was kept so busy around Ortona that he couldn't find time to ship his wife the mink coat he was wearing as a lining for his trench-coat. Being the dog-in-the-manger type, he had refused to sell it to the regi-

"C'MON, Y'GOT 10 LIRE WORTH!"







*"AN T'THINK, IN ME ROMANCIN'  
DAYS, I WELCOMED SUCH LOVELY  
MOONLIT NIGHTS."*

*"HOW LONG DO YOU EXPECT TO  
BE HERE, CHUM?"*





mental quartermaster sergeant for 1,000,000 lire. Just goes to show that some guys won't do anything for money.

While Nero's market was testing the ingenuity of soldati Canadese, the word got around that something had happened back in Blighty and thousands there were booking reservations for a boat ride to the continent. Not long after, it was learned that Canadians were indeed on tour in France. The statement that they, too, were limited to the amount of guineas they could spend on buying peppermint drinks for the daughters in the Amantieres family, prompted a wave of sympathy throughout the corps in Italy. They, even more than their predecessors, must have been badly bruised by the Yanks in the queues before the off-license houses.

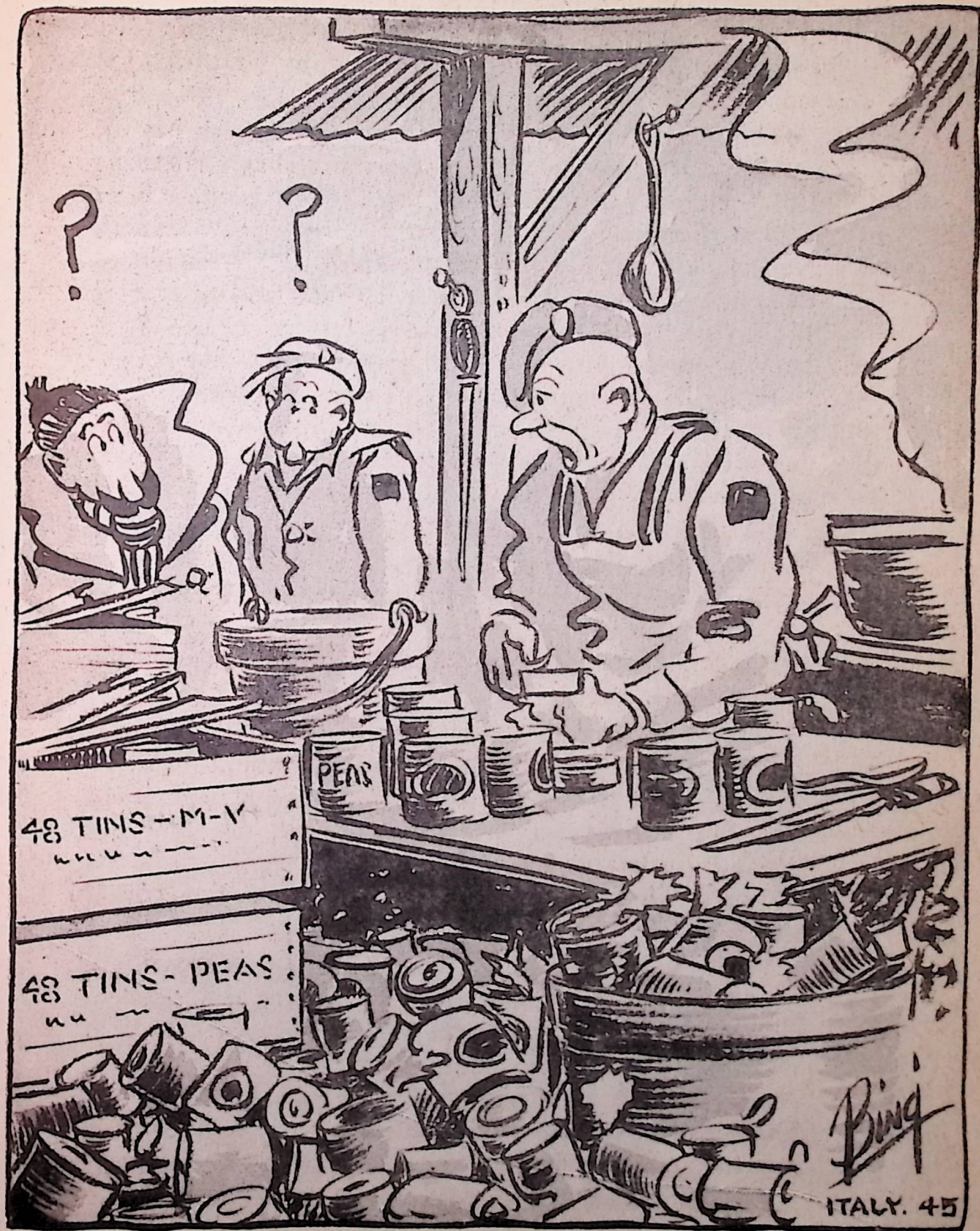
That they were not long in getting into the spirit of the thing, however, was indicated in a Paris fashion show the following spring when it was discovered that the most brilliant ensemble on display was a bathing suit consisting of two epaulets from a Canadian battledress and the pocket of a gas cape.

The boys apparently were so free with their francs and things that echelon complained bitterly about inflation by the time they caught up with whatever had been going on. But nobody was inclined to take echelon very seriously, even though it included such dangerous characters as public relations officers and Maple Leaf sergeant sub-editors.

The price of Calvados finally becoming almost prohibitive, the First Canadian Army moved to Belgium, only to discover the Belgium franc was an even costlier exchange proposition. Whereupon, they moved into South Holland to open the now-famous Battle of the Gulden, or Guilder, or Glider, or "youhaven'tgotthatmanysowninyourpaybook".

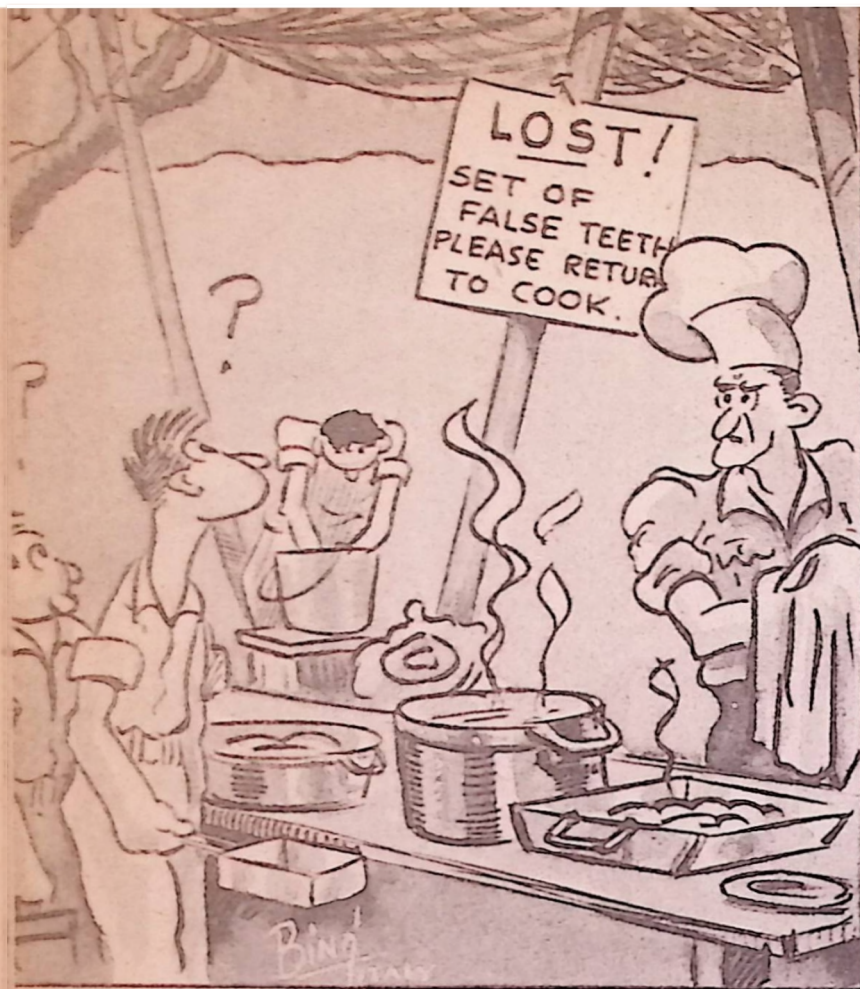
By late winter, lured by stories of the fancy prices





"FOUR YEARS AGO WHEN I JOINED UP I KNEW NOTHING AT ALL ABOUT COOKIN'!"





"WELL!"

NAAFI cigarettes were extracting from the Dutch, the corps that had been hibernating in Italy came arunnin' to join their comrades and unloaded such large quantities of Woodbines, the bottom threatened to fall out of the market and there was much annoyance here and there.

This was soon remedied, however, by the triumphal entry into West Holland. The natives had been obliged for so long to puff on corn silk, when they could find the corn, that they were prepared to pay up to three gulden for anything resembling tobacco. The amount quoted is for one repeat one cigarette and, when you figure that a gulden was rated in the neighborhood of 40 cents—at least in the army's books it was—you have something sizeable in the way of return.

Of course, the price level was too good to last, particularly when some former employees of Joe's Cut Rate moved into the area, but packages of 20, specially wrapped for Christmas, no extra charge, were still bringing 20





"MAINTENANCE I PRESUME? ?"



gulden during the recent Yuletide season, which ain't hay, nor even corn silk.

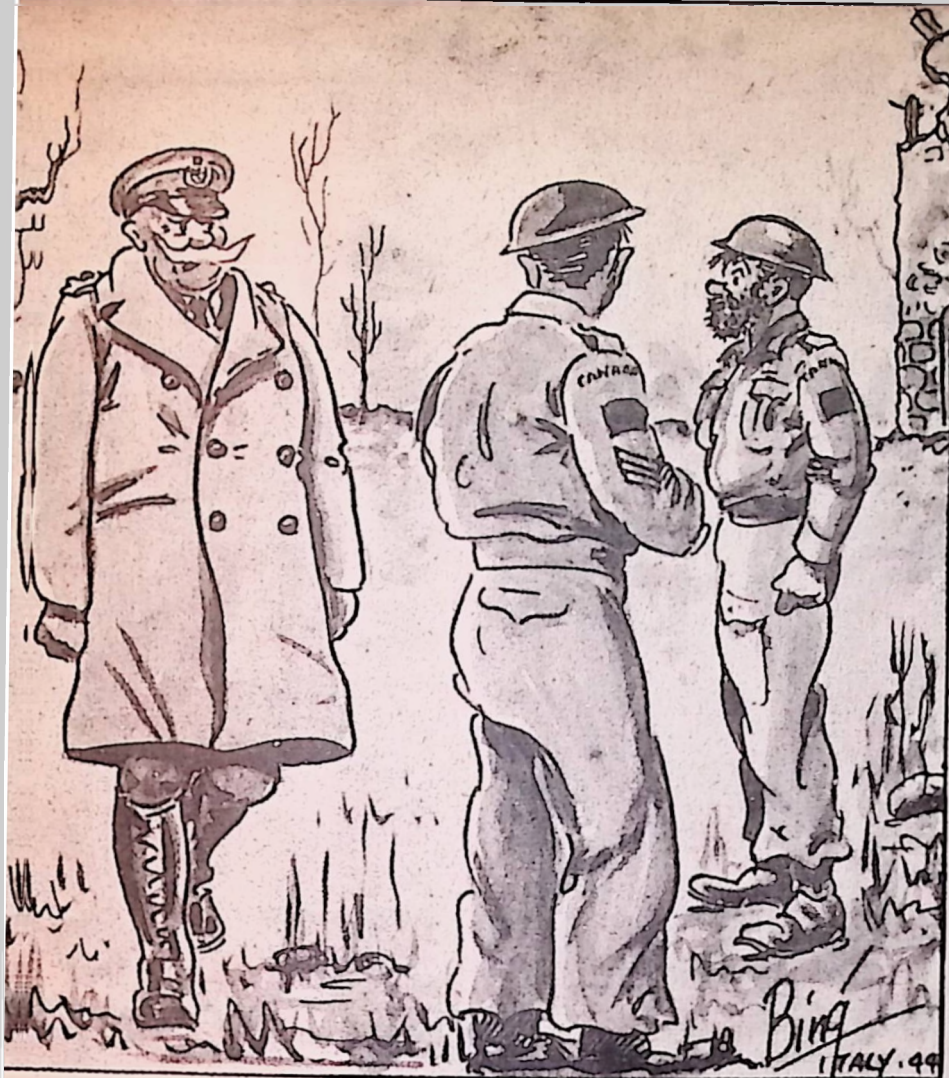
This sort of thing will probably explain to innocent civilians, paying their 33 for 20 back home, why there was such a hullabaloo when the monthly quota of fags overseas was cut for a time from 900 to 600.

Unfortunately, the ever-thoughtless Germans left very little in Holland to attract the eye of the would-be purchaser and many of Canada's finest found themselves with plenty of the ready but Dutch store cupboards exceedingly bare. This lead to the popularity of Brussels and Paris as leave centres and money was being put in for exchange so rapidly and in such great amounts that Canadian paymasters found to their consternation, they were getting more gulden back than they dished out. The trend became particularly evident after the lads started indulging in the happy pastime of capturing German paymasters, heavily-laden with Dutch shekels. Several units

**"I FIND THE BEST JOINT IN  
TOWN, YET YOU SQUAWK."**







"SGT., SEE THAT THIS MAN  
SHAVES, IF HE HAD A PIPE IN  
HIS MOUTH HE'D LOOK LIKE A  
DUCK BLIND."

LET'S SEE! FOUR'NA HALF YEARS  
AT FIFTEEN BUCKS A MONTH,  
PLUS, HMM m.







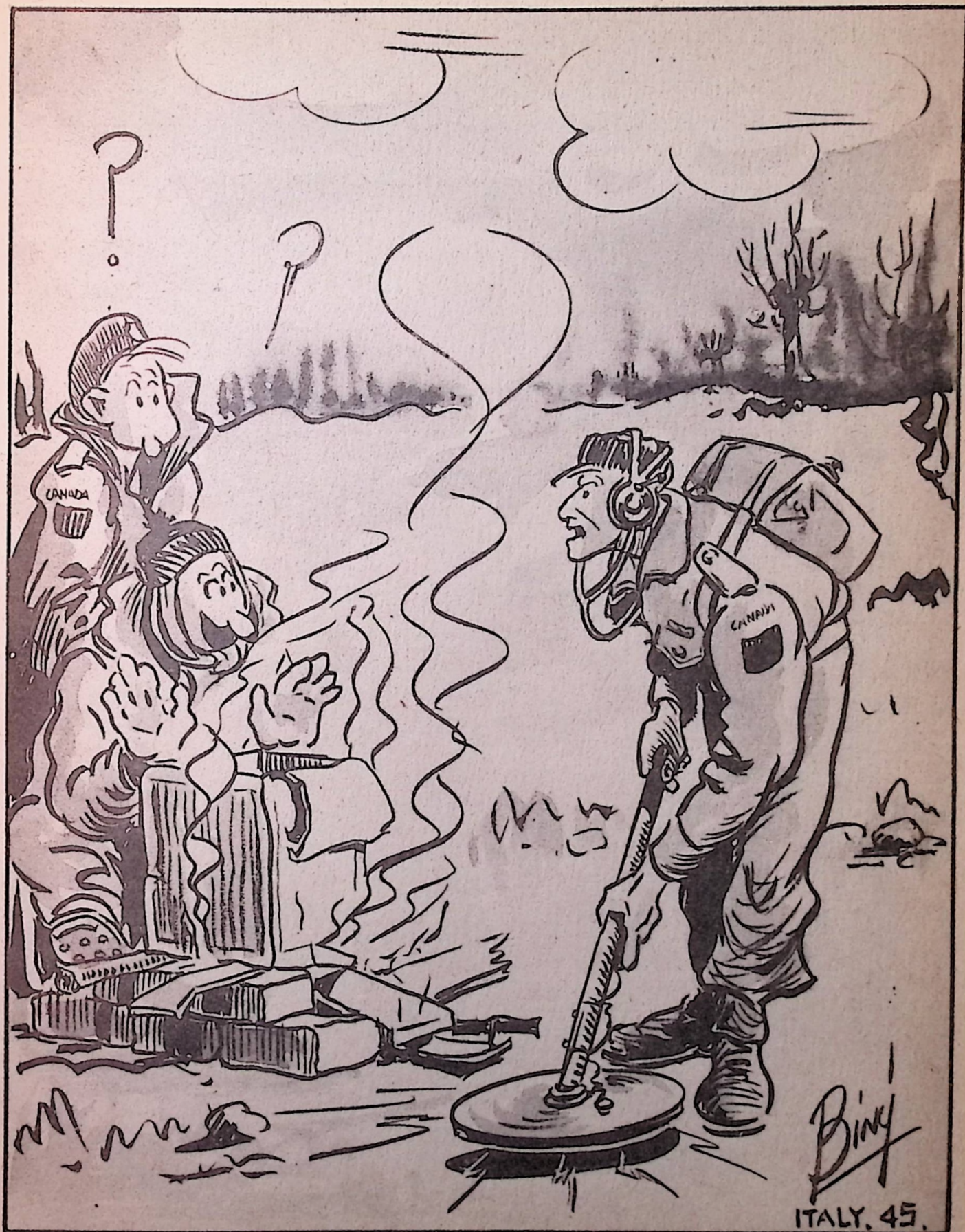
*"ANOTHER SECRET WEAPON OF  
JERRIES, FIRST, THE DOODLE  
BUG, NOW THIS, WHAT NEXT?"*

were reported to have called time out in the heat of battle to hold pay parades with the proceeds, but no commanding officer of our acquaintance would ever attach any credence to such a statement.

Various schemes were devised by the alert paymasters, almost at a loss to account for such a condition, to check the intake. The Dutch Government began to figure, from the amount of money at large, that somebody had discovered a way to beat the slot machine. It called in the old money, issued sparing amounts of the new.

But, at last reports, trade continued brisk all 'round. Nobody apparently had bothered to check Dutch sailors plying across the Channel and who, with his latest issue of Gold Flake, could resist the briefcase boy on Dam Place with his password "Cigarettes for English pounds"? He was such a nice-looking kid—in a commercial sort of way.





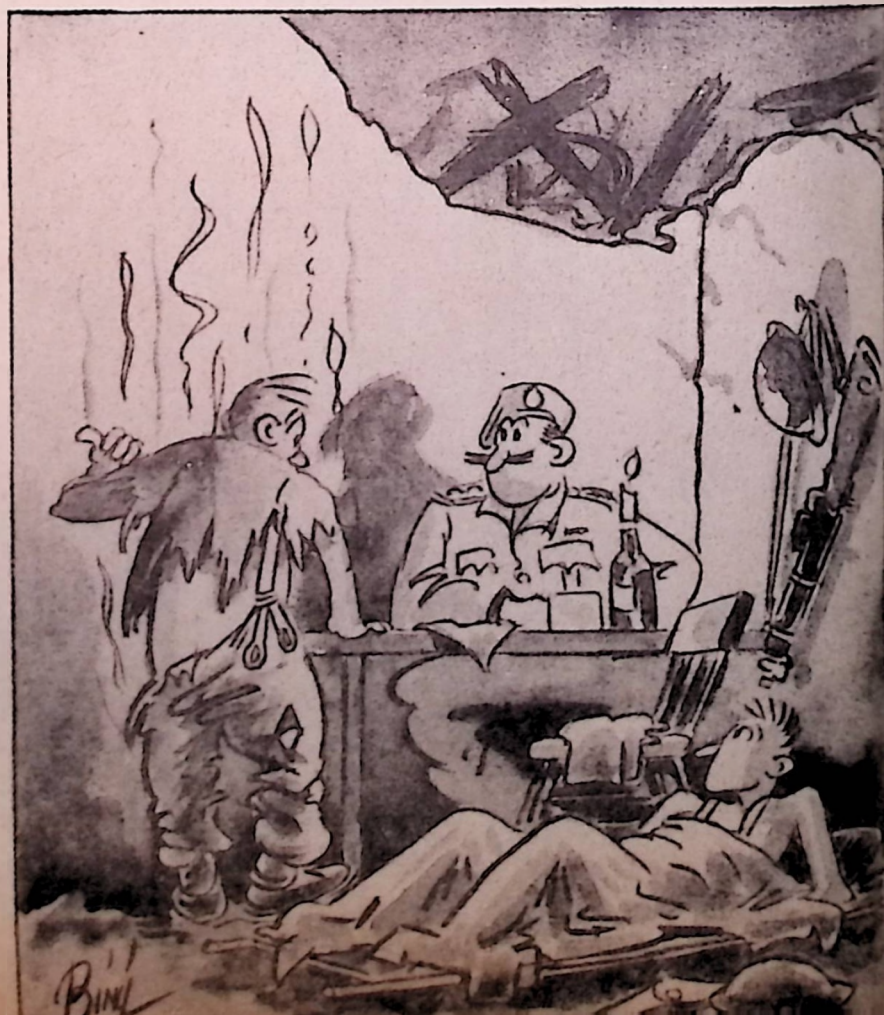
"I'D STRONGLY ADVISE YOU TO MOVE YER FIRE TO ANOTHER SPOT!"



All this leads to the discovery that, despite the fact the Canadian Army Council or somebody equally perceptive had abandoned the compulsory savings plan long since, by the time most of the military arrived in England on something important like a repat draft, they had enough currency to fill grandma's nylon. This was extracted from them by a simple army method—the minute they returned from a 10-day leave, they were immediately sent on another one. Three straight was guaranteed to relieve even the most miserly gents of any worries about getting to any Canadian bank before it closed.

Which may be the reason why so many seem unable to meet their alimony payments these days.

**"REPORTING TWO BOOBY TRAPS,  
SIR, ONE STILL INTACT!"**







"A GOOSE SIR??? — NOT AROUND HERE SIR!, 'AT'S BEANIE  
HE'S GOT A BAD COLD SIR!"



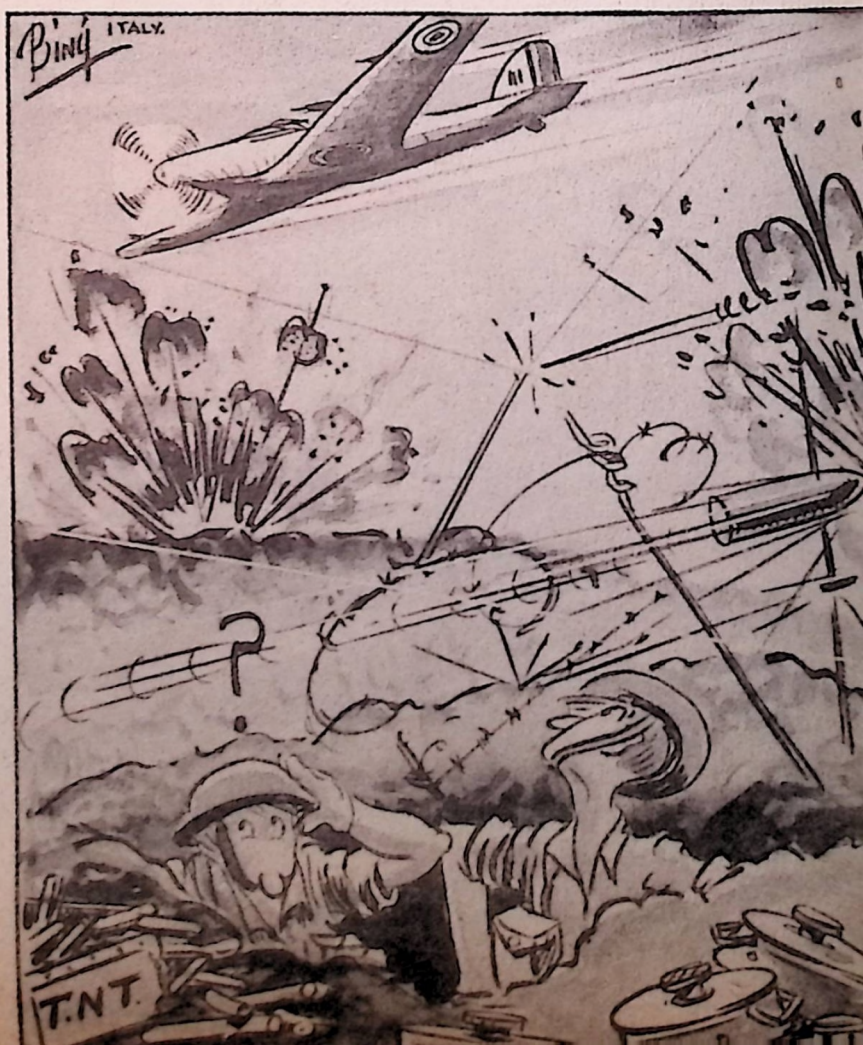
## IV

### Fetch Me That Gin, Boy . . .

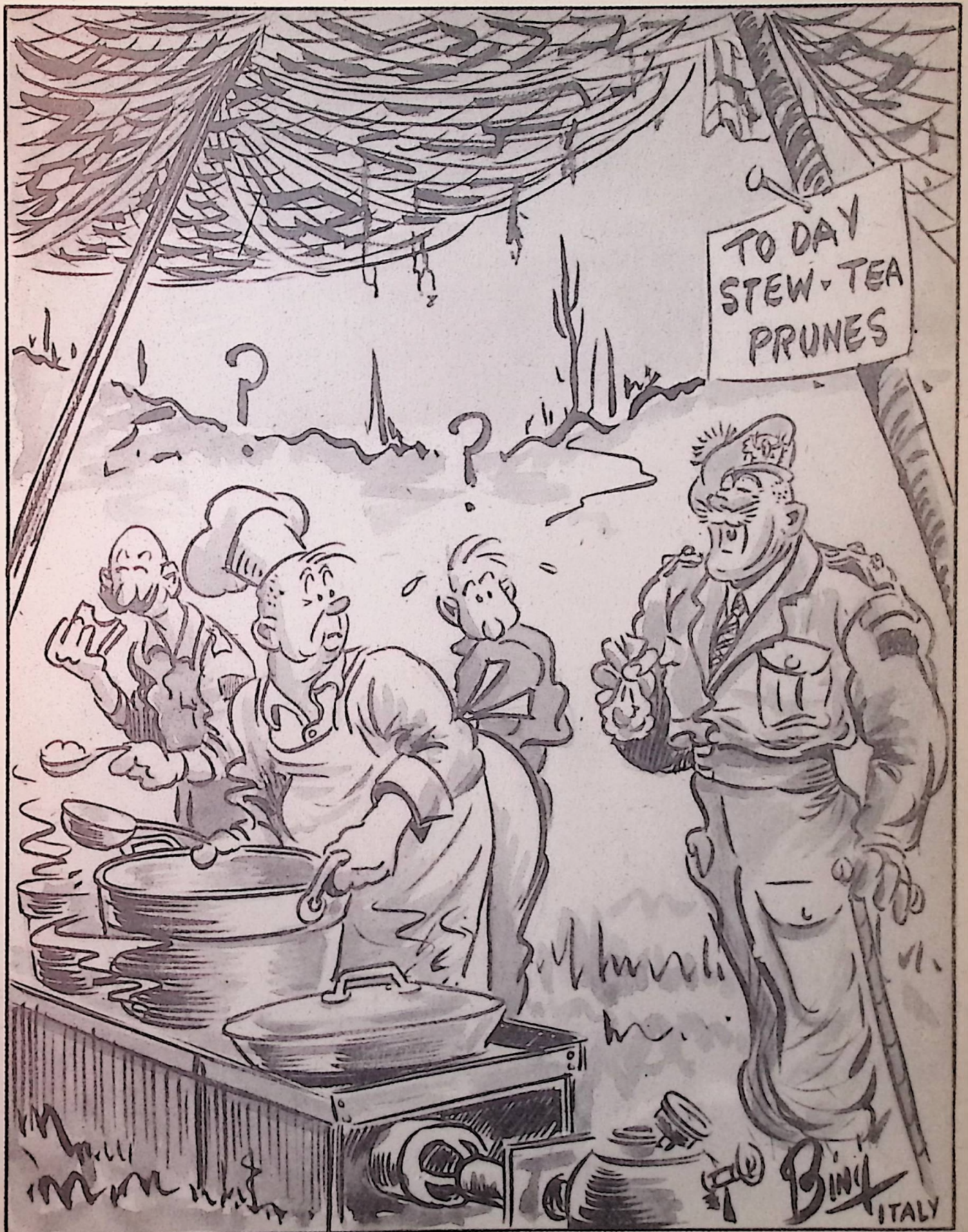
Various well-meaning civilian agencies have expressed the opinion, from time to time, that there was far too much bending of the elbow by uniformed individuals during the war and the nation's future backbone was in danger of permanent spinal anaesthesia through absorption of alcoholic beverages. The army was blamed for introducing many a youth to the wrathful grapes but this attitude, of course, failed to take into account the experience of said youths prior to signing for the duration plus.

So that all and sundry may be put straight on this matter, we quote a sergeant who saw fit in the early days of the war to test the staying power of several recruits. From underneath a table several hours later, he hiccuped

**"THEY TAKE AWFUL CHANCES  
DON'T THEY?"**







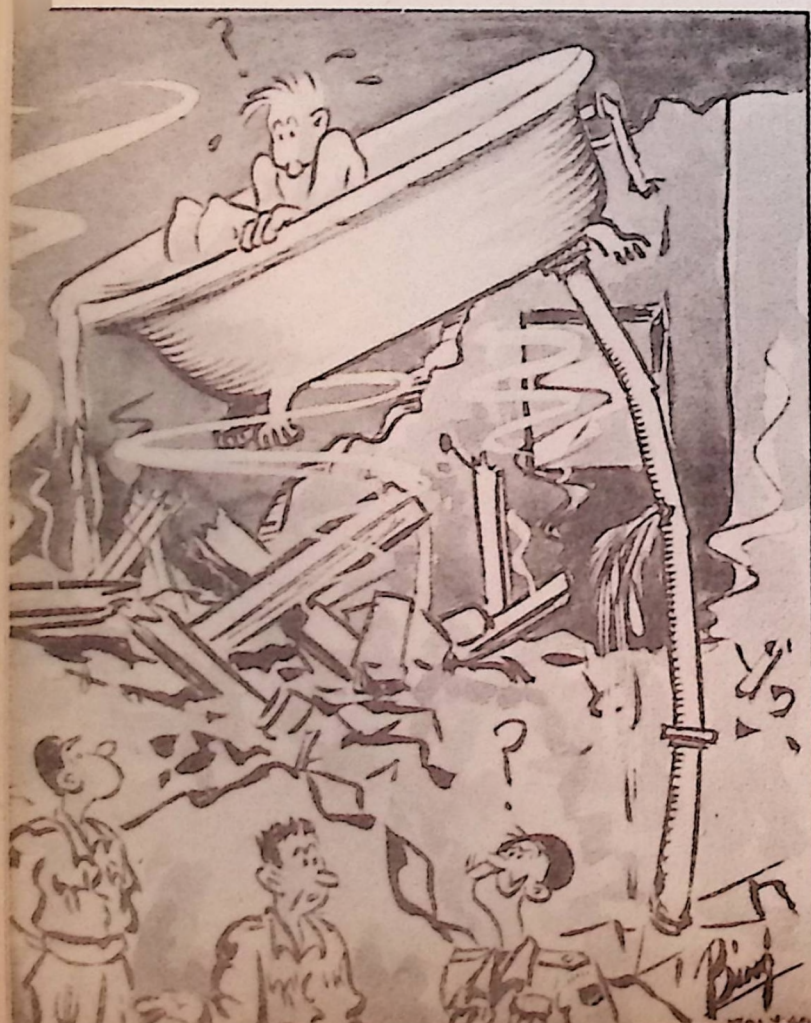
**"AND I MIGHT SUGGEST, A RAGOUT OF BEEF, WITH A CHESTNUT SAUCE, SAY VIENNESE NUSSROULADE. HERE ARE THE CHESTNUTS!"**



for posterity: "Brother, that beverage room battle drill really must be tough."

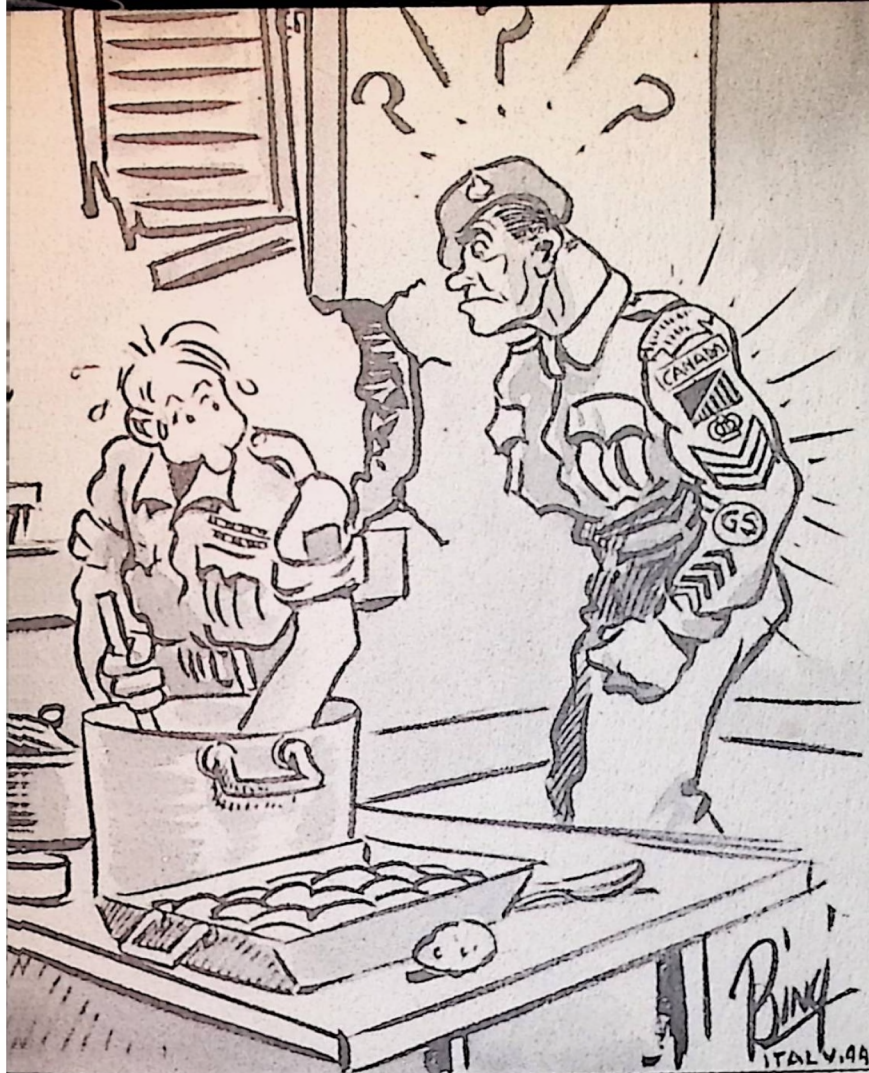
With this question settled, we can proceed with little short of reckless abandon to discuss the reason why so many veterans are starting to learn how to spell duodenal ulcers. Up to the time of arrival overseas, the average khaki-carrier had tasted nothing worse than Nova Scotia rum, canned heat, and Fitch's hair tonic, and was thus very much of a stupe when it came to some of the better things in life. Very few even knew it was the international custom to dilute certain types of whiskey with soda.

They were thus unprepared for the English pubs which purveyed such potent mixtures as mild and bitter, light, bass, cider, lager and NAAFI sausage. Some, unable to cope with all this, started taking snuff. Others became so proficient at darts they could knock off a double-one blind . . . folded. Still others fell victim to a weird and



**"HE PULLED THE PLUG AND  
WHAM, SHE BLEW!"**



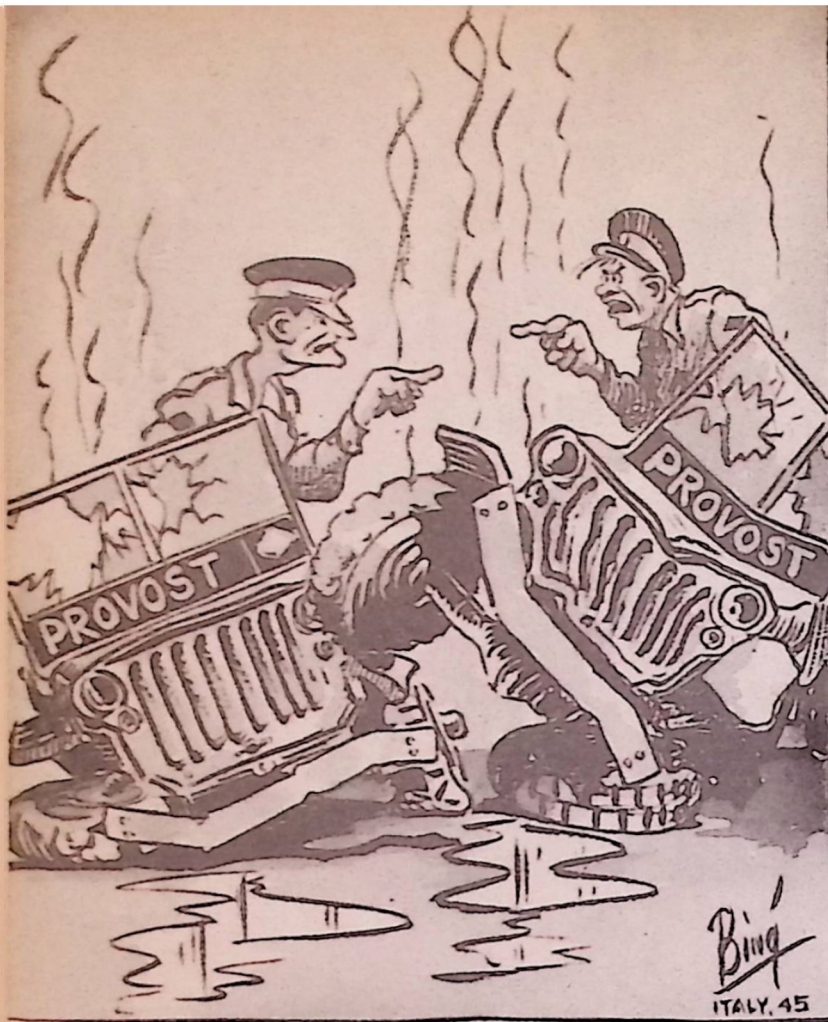


**"JUST OVER FROM CANADA I PRESUME!"**



**"LITTLE TOO OBVIOUS DONT'CHA THINK?"**





?-‘h-@-’!â’!..‘d-@!ê?g-?-

wonderful concoction called Pims, even going so far as to mix rum and whiskey Pims, with almost disastrous results.

When the atomic bomb started the Japs thinking they might have lost the war, the first conclusion drawn by many charter members of wet canteen lodges was that the Pims people had finally released their secret formula to the Allied High Command. This was promptly denied by a public relations counsel for Pims Inc., who admitted that at one time uranium had been considered as a potential ingredient but had lacked enough strength to mix with the rest of the recipe. Thereby bearing out the theory that Pims certainly is not the pause that refreshes, but strictly a long tough week-end.

Those hardy souls who managed to survive the course of training sponsored by such educationalists as Johnnie Walker, Messrs. Haig and Haig and a Mr. Teacher were inclined to be a bit cocky by the time they reached





"IT'S IMPOSSIBLE, — MY BATMAN TOLD ME SO!"

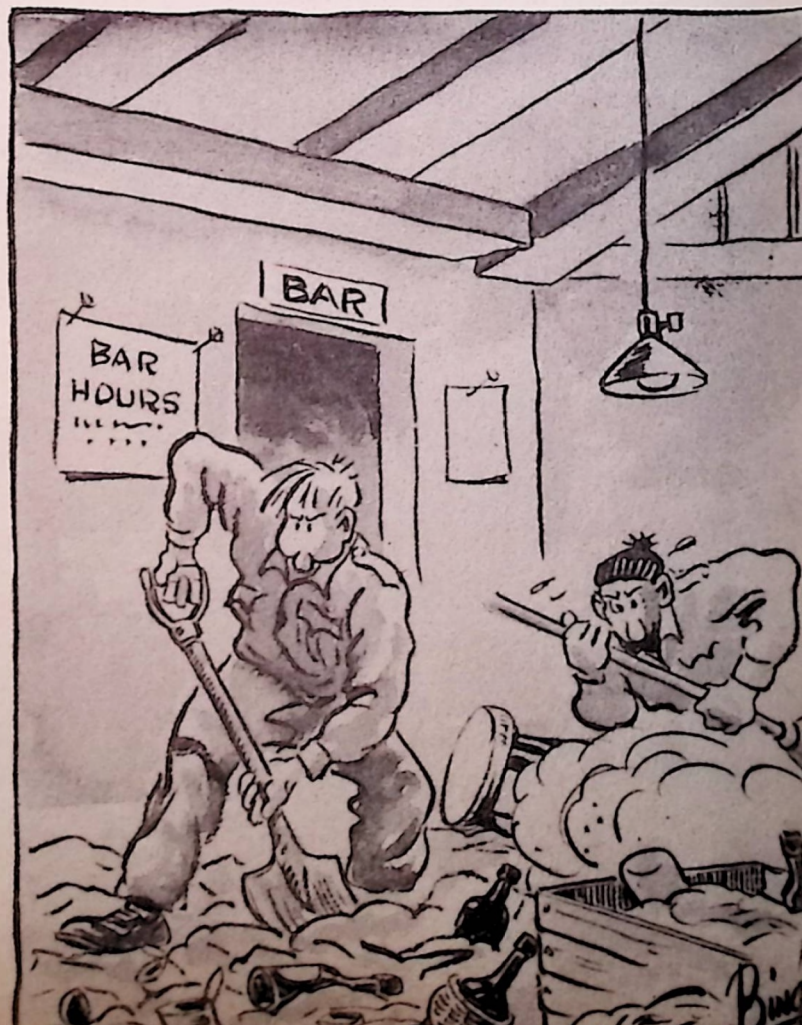


the Sicilian vineyards and partook therefrom. This cockiness was suddenly lost, however, in the haze produced by vino rosso, vino bianco and a fall down the Taormina cliffs. The fighting men of one unit, firmly entrenched in a broken-down castle near Catania, refused to enter the wine cellar for two days in the fear that it was booby-trapped. Unable to stand the suspense any longer, they bribed two engineers with 164 cartons of "V" cigarettes to investigate, proceeded to imbibe freely thereafter and discovered the next day the engineers were from a bridging company and thought a booby trap had something to do with catching squirrels.

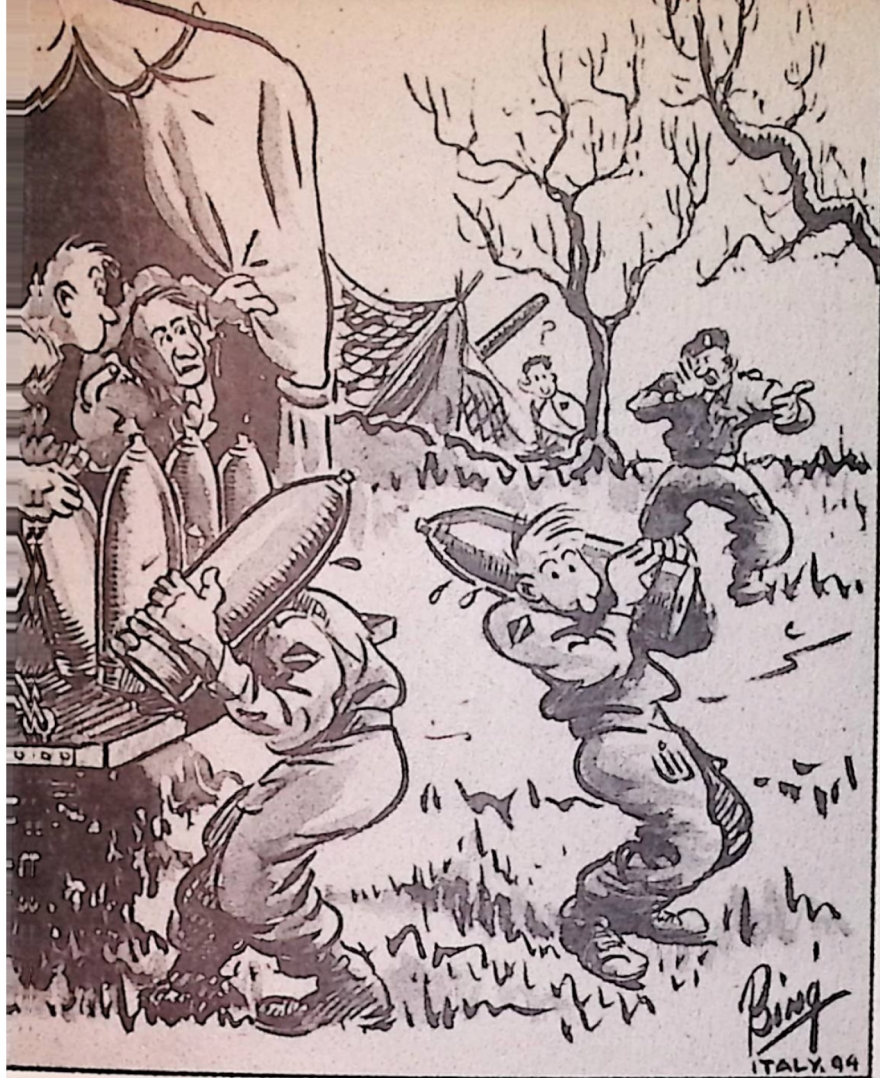
Only a trap of the most vicious type could have produced the kind of collective hangover that pinned them to their bed rolls.

It was just about this time that the fatigue of battle led to many sad cases of soldiers suffering hallucinations. The most serious was a man who kept insisting that he

*"ALL I CAN SAY ABOUT THIS  
OFFICERS' MESS IS,—IT MOST  
CERTAINLY IS!"*

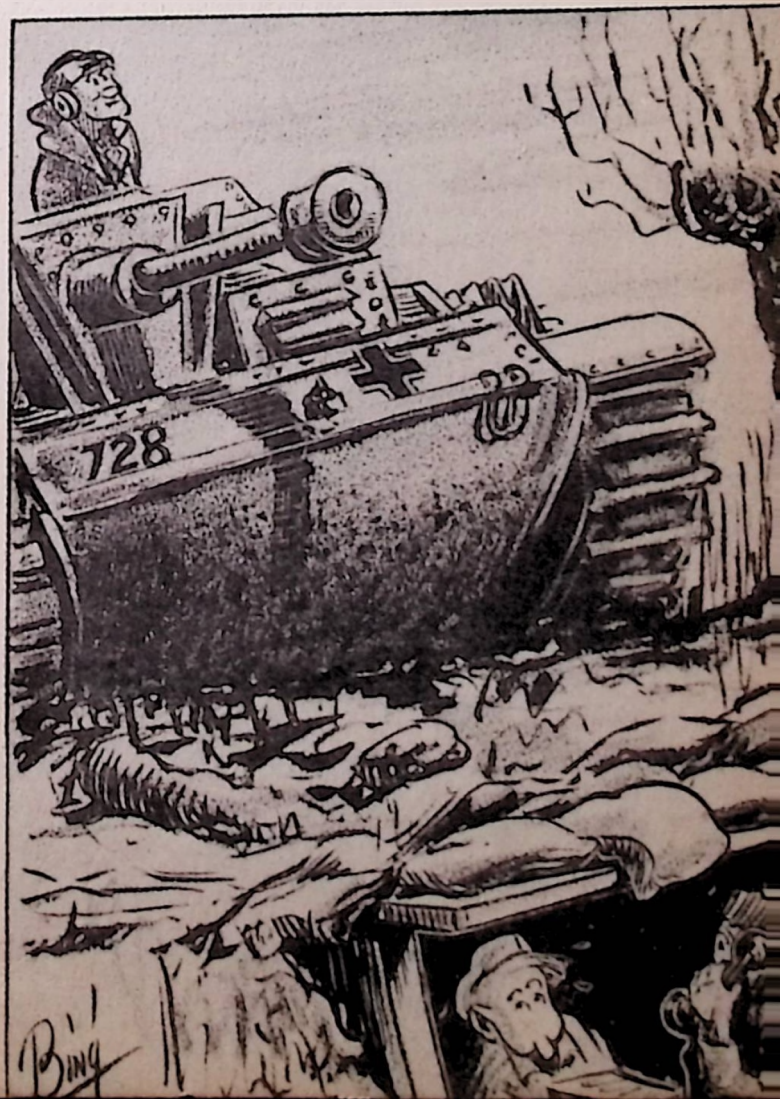






"AWRIGHT! DROP WOT YER  
DOIN' AN' GET OVER HERE FER  
P.T."

"A TANK? — I DON'T THINK SO  
SIR, BUT I'LL TAKE ANOTHER  
LOOK."





*"THERE HE GOES WITH THAT  
SMOKEY SMITH STUFF AGAIN."*



had seen a mess sergeant drinking a bottle of Canadian beer. This, of course, was more than enough to convince the unit medical officer that the poor lad was almost beyond hope. Everybody knew that Canadian beer was only shipped to the Yanks in Bermuda or the hard-pressed reinforcements units at Phillipeville.

It was not until weeks later, as the M.O. was sipping his Christmas issue of Black Horse, that he bethought himself of the case and had the lad released from No. 5 General Hospital.

In their travels through Italy, the doughty Canadians encountered many explosive mixtures in the guise of cognac, strega and such but, failing to realize when they were well off, a number of the more fearless assembled a contraption that assuredly would have been outlawed by the Geneva conventions if anyone had thought of such a thing. This devilish invention of war produced a highly inflammable liquid known as "steam" and was





"FOR THE THIRD TIME, I DON'T GIVE A DAMN HOW MUCH YER  
OLE MAN LIKES HUNTIN' — YA CAN'T SEND IT!"

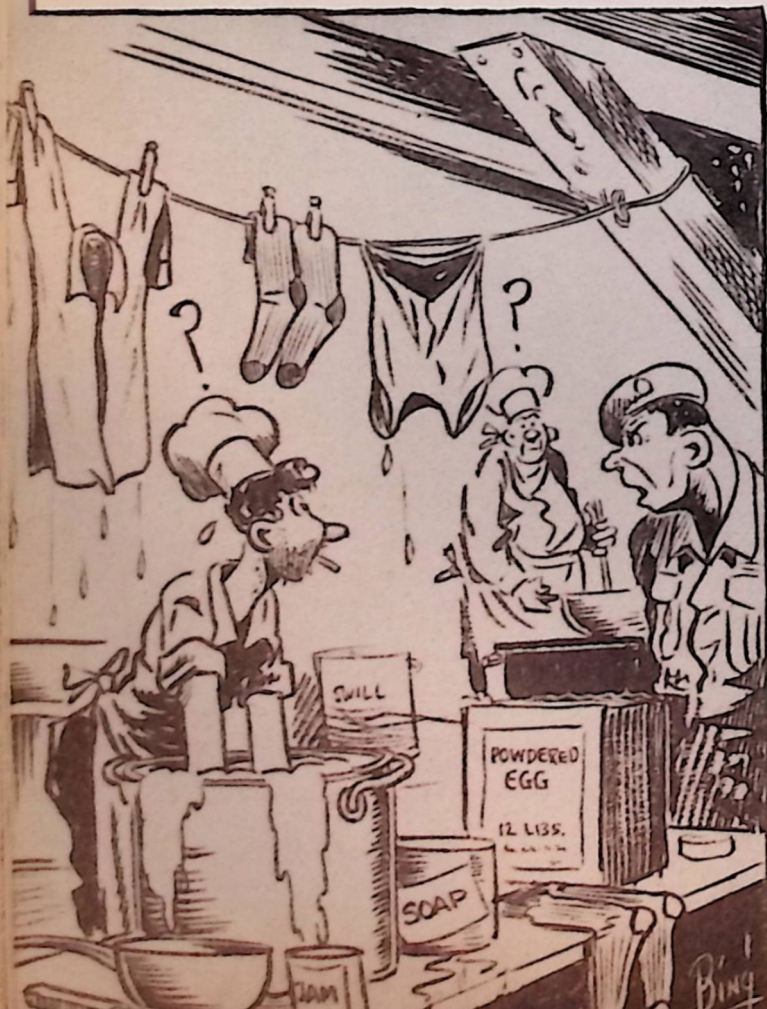


said to have been used, for a time, in flame throwers but finally abandoned as too inhuman.

An insight into what this "steam", reportedly linked with the persistent shortage of raisins in rice pudding and a new method for distilling vino, could do to enliven proceedings is given by this entry in the war diary of an infantry unit of considerable renown:

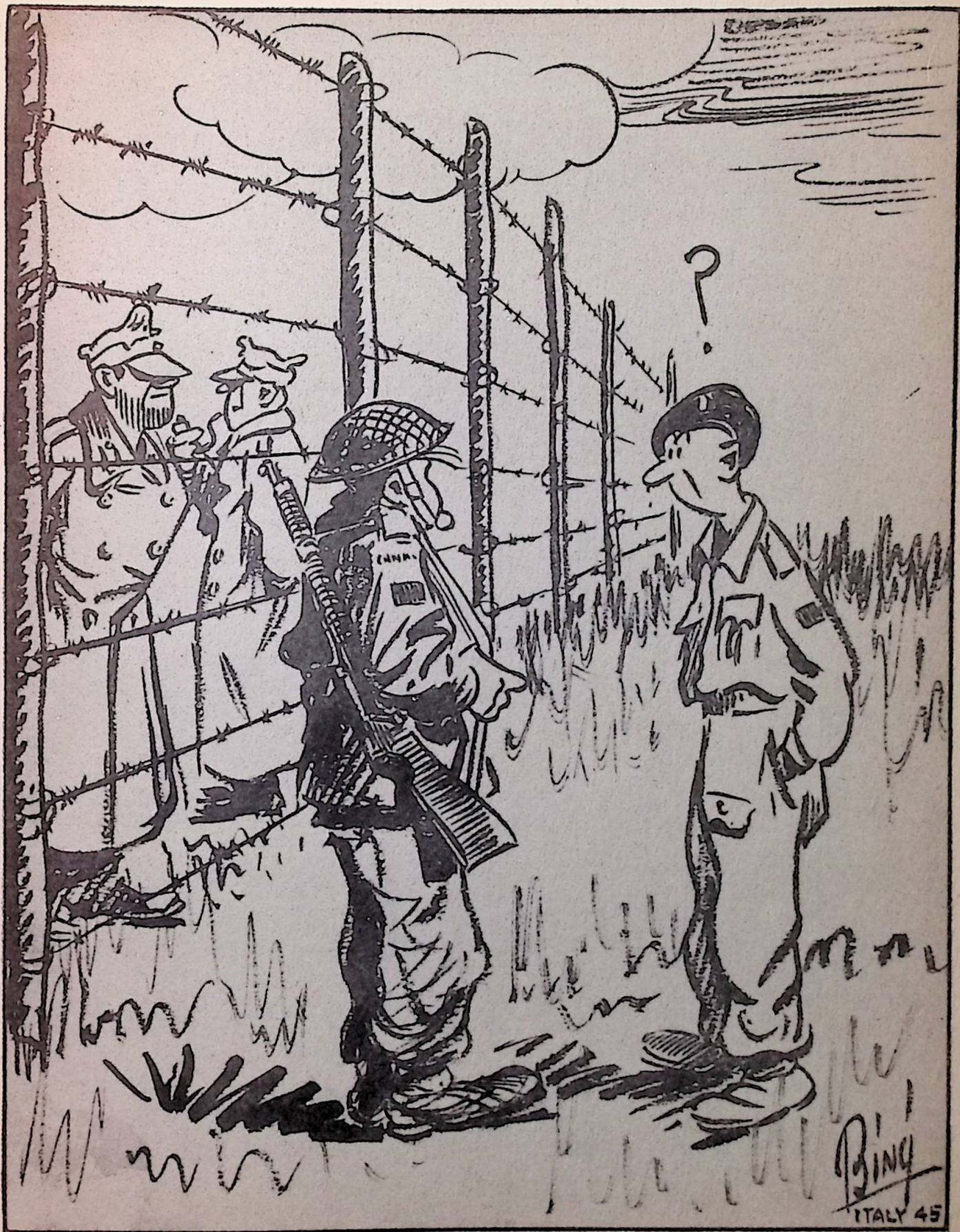
"It had been a very tough show. The casualties from malaria, jaundice and the hives had whittled "B" echelon to almost 100, all ranks. Reinforcements were arriving in such large numbers, that word got around that the base depots at Avalino had been bombed two nights running.

"Four of the latest arrivals, having been formally introduced when one advised that just by mere chance he happened to have a deck of cards, were sitting in the left-overs of a two-storey casa, doing whatever people usually do with a deck of cards. Only the restrained mooing



**"Y'BIN AN OFFICERS MESS COOK  
FER TWO YEARS AN' WOUNDED  
TWICE, — YER A LUCKY MAN,  
IT'S A WONDER THEY DIDN'T  
KILL YA!"**





"HE SEZ HE'LL BE IN CANADA AHEAD OF US—I WONDER HOW MANY POINTS HE'S GOT?"



of a potential beefsteak, tied up to the leg of the dining room table, and the occasional gurgle as the demijohn was passed around disturbed the atmosphere when . . .

"A sergeant, veteran of three days' service with the unit, returned from inhaling a jug of steam at a nearby encampment, staggered through the doorway and upstairs in the general direction of his sack.

"The gent in the stocking cap said: 'Bump ya 10.'

"The sergeant staggered through the doorway and upstairs in the general direction of his sack.

"The gent in the elastic braces said: 'Call.'

"The sergeant staggered through the doorway and upstairs in the general direction of his sack.

"The gent with the C.V.S.M. said: 'Ya know, that sergeant's face seems familiar. Must have seen him somewhere before, maybe at Pompeii or somethin'.'

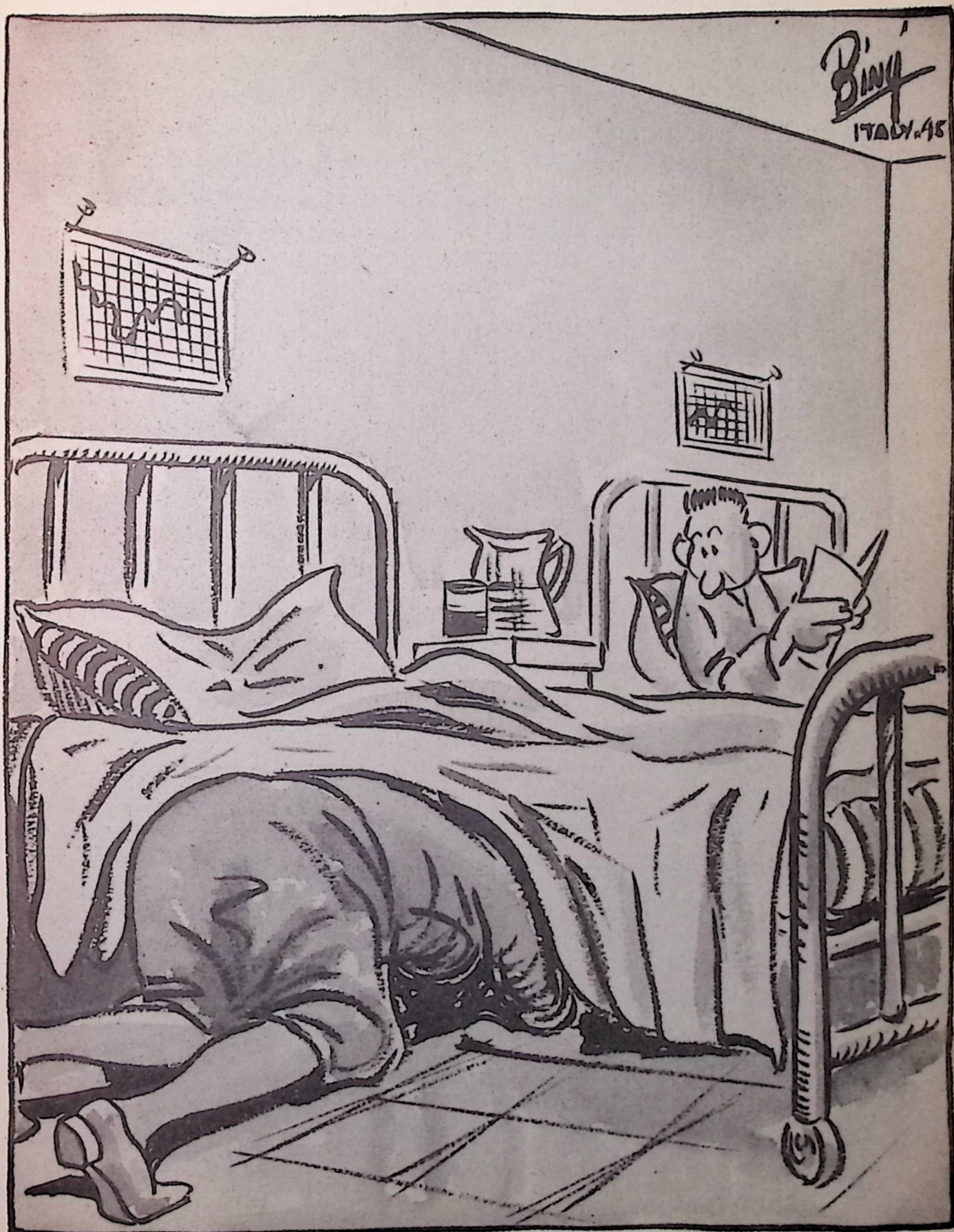
"The sergeant was cited the next day by his commanding officer for conduct far beyond the call of duty in the face of almost overwhelming odds, and was moved to another house that didn't have a shell hole at the end of the upstairs hall."

While balking at the use of steam in direct attack on the enemy, particularly after Winston Churchill vetoed the stuff during an inspection of the Italian frontline area, certain Canadian characters saw no reason why they shouldn't resort to infiltration tactics. Whereupon they allowed one of their steam units to be captured by a patrol of innocent Tedeschi, which was believed responsible for what happened during the subsequent Christmas celebrations on the Senio river.

Before going any further, it should be pointed out that the combatants on the Senio were in a rather peculiar position of proximity. Our dauntless forces were on one side of the river and the Wehrmacht Willies were on . . . the same side of the river. Only a high dyke separated the two, and this cosy situation led to such nasty little



Bing  
ITALY '45



"C'MON NOW, EITHER YOU TAKE THIS OR I'LL REPORT YOU TO THE DOCTOR."



pranks as the sling-shooting of M and V tins and the rolling of Teller mines down the bank. Medical officers exchanged prisoners and bottles of vino. It was reported that three reinforcements for the Carleton and York wound up with Kesselring's machine gun battalion.

It was in this spirit of good fellowship that the Yuletide approached and, as Christmas Day dawned bright and clear, the Berlin Glee Club could be heard giving out with "Good King Wenceslas" and other ditties of appropriate nature. Not to be outdone, the Canadians cleared the rum from their throats and contributed a touching rendition of "Bless Them All", with "One Fish Ball" for an encore. Seasonal salutations were exchanged, including such heartwarming wishes as "Merry Christmas, you baby-killing Kraut" and "Gesundheit, Canadian schweinhund."

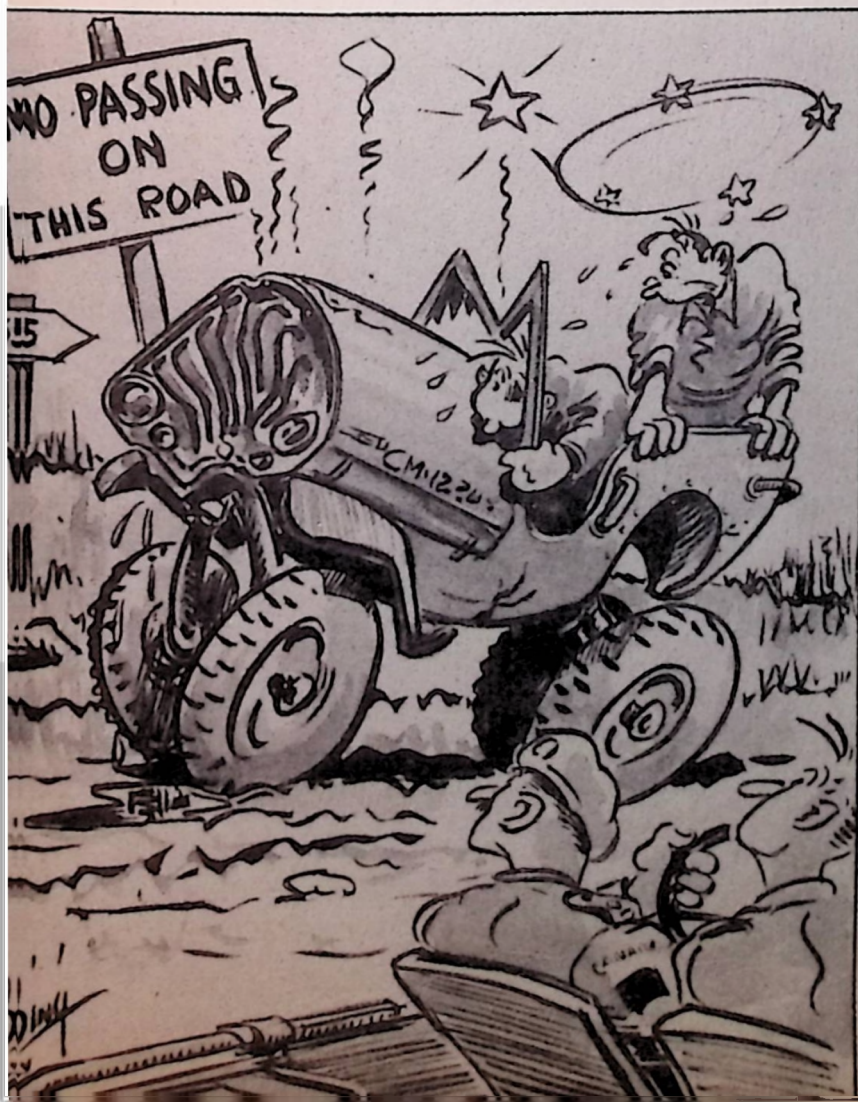
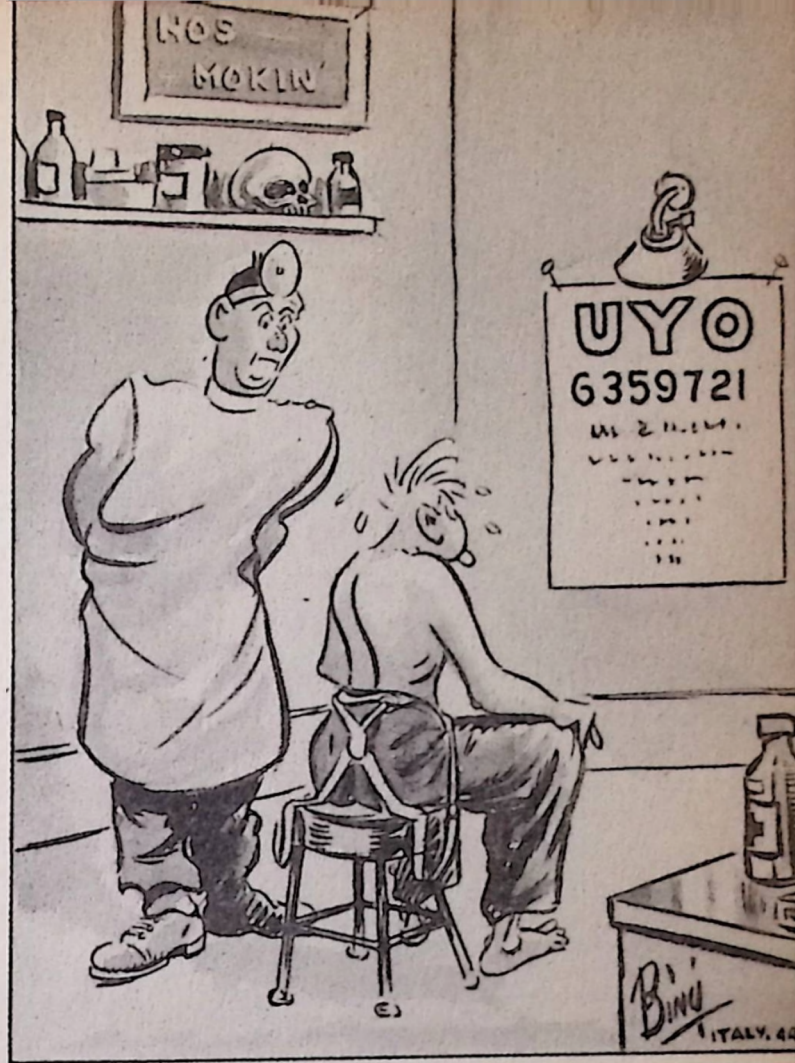
At this stage, much to the consternation of our heroes, the head of a big white horse, the head that is, appeared above the dyke bank and on what came after it was perched a joyous Jerry. With one hand he doffed his helmet to right and left in greeting to all concerned; with the other he clutched a bottle which, from time to time, he lifted in the general area of his tonsils. One look was enough to convince even the most skeptical Canadian that here indeed was a steam case. One conscientious corporal reached for his Bren but, discovering he'd have to get up to get it, reached for the demijohn instead.

And so the Uhlan booted his steed the length of the dyke bank, ahoopin' and ahollerin', while Canada's First Division shook its collective head in sympathy that steam could do such a thing and fired nary a shot. Medical documents captured later revealed the only wound suffered by the jockey was a bruised behind, when the horse threw him in disgust at the end of the line.

A sharp, young major back at brigade, hearing of this dyke-trotting, decided by nightfall the Wehrmacht would



"A HORSE SHOE, A SLING-SHOT,  
A BULL'S EYE AND A MAP  
REFERENCE . . . . ."



"HE TRIED TO SQUEEZE BETWEEN  
A BULLDOZER AN' A TANK!"





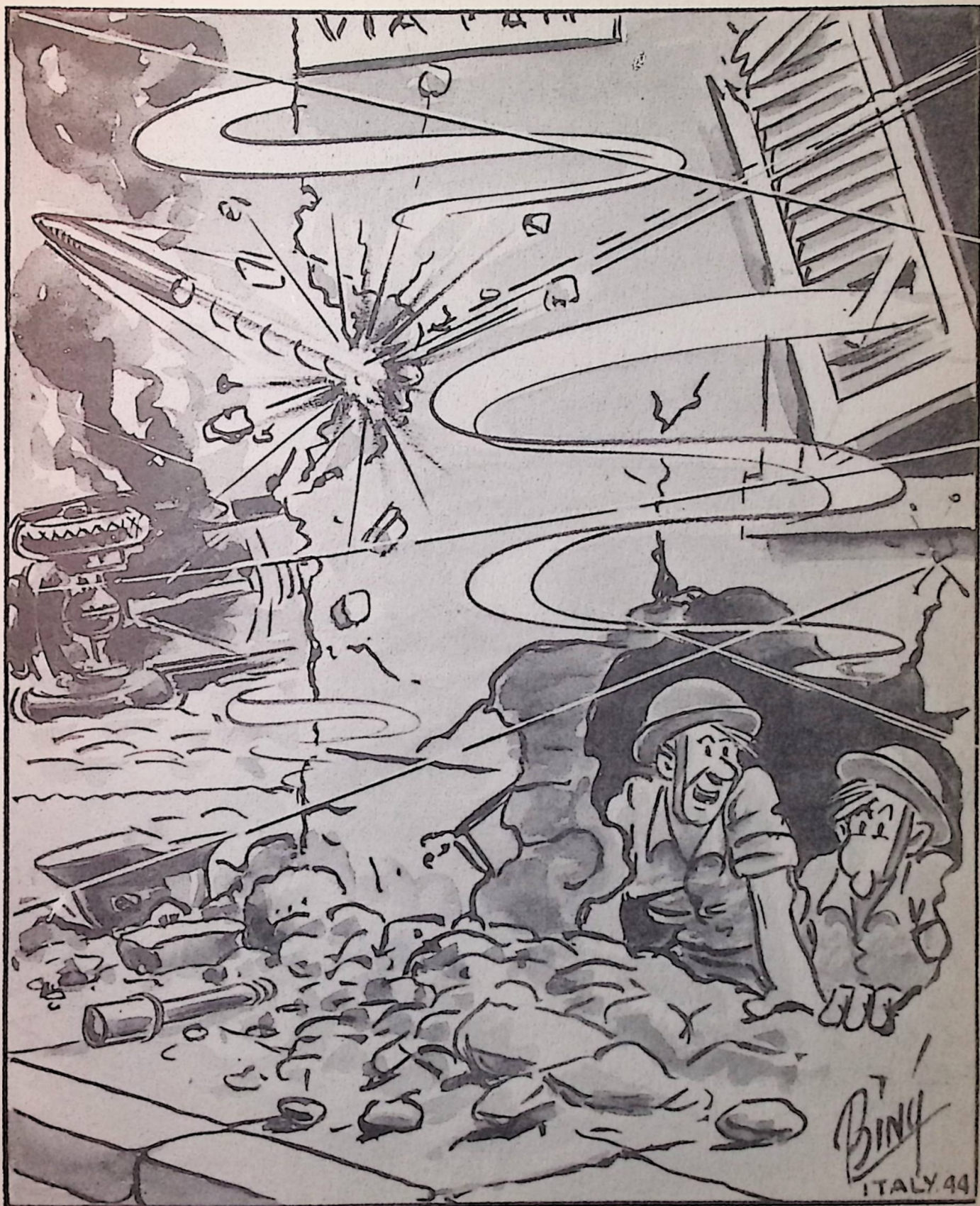
*"WHAT A HELLUVA TIME TO  
RUN OUT OF AMMO!"*

be well woozled and suggested a fighting patrol in considerable strength investigate the situation. The four guys who came back reported the Jerries certainly were steamed up about something.

The reputation of steam in Italy as the daddy of them all in pain-killers was endangered at one stage by a sadistic bartender in an officers' mess who came up with a potation significantly entitled "Depth Charge." This cataleptic cocktail was produced by mixing a noggin of medicinal cognac with five-year-old Marsala vinp. Two nights after its introduction, Herbie's depth-charged company commander was quoted from his hands and knees on the cold Itie cobblestones: "I'm gonna climb this wall if it takes me all night." So you see . . .

Meanwhile, another set of characters was making contact with the product of Normandy apple orchards, known to the trade as Calvados, and reeling back in disorder from same. An expert on such things says this





"BETCHA 10 BUCKS THE CENSORS CUT IT DOWN TO, . . . ACTIVITY  
WAS CONFINED TO ROUTINE PATROL SKIRMISHING."



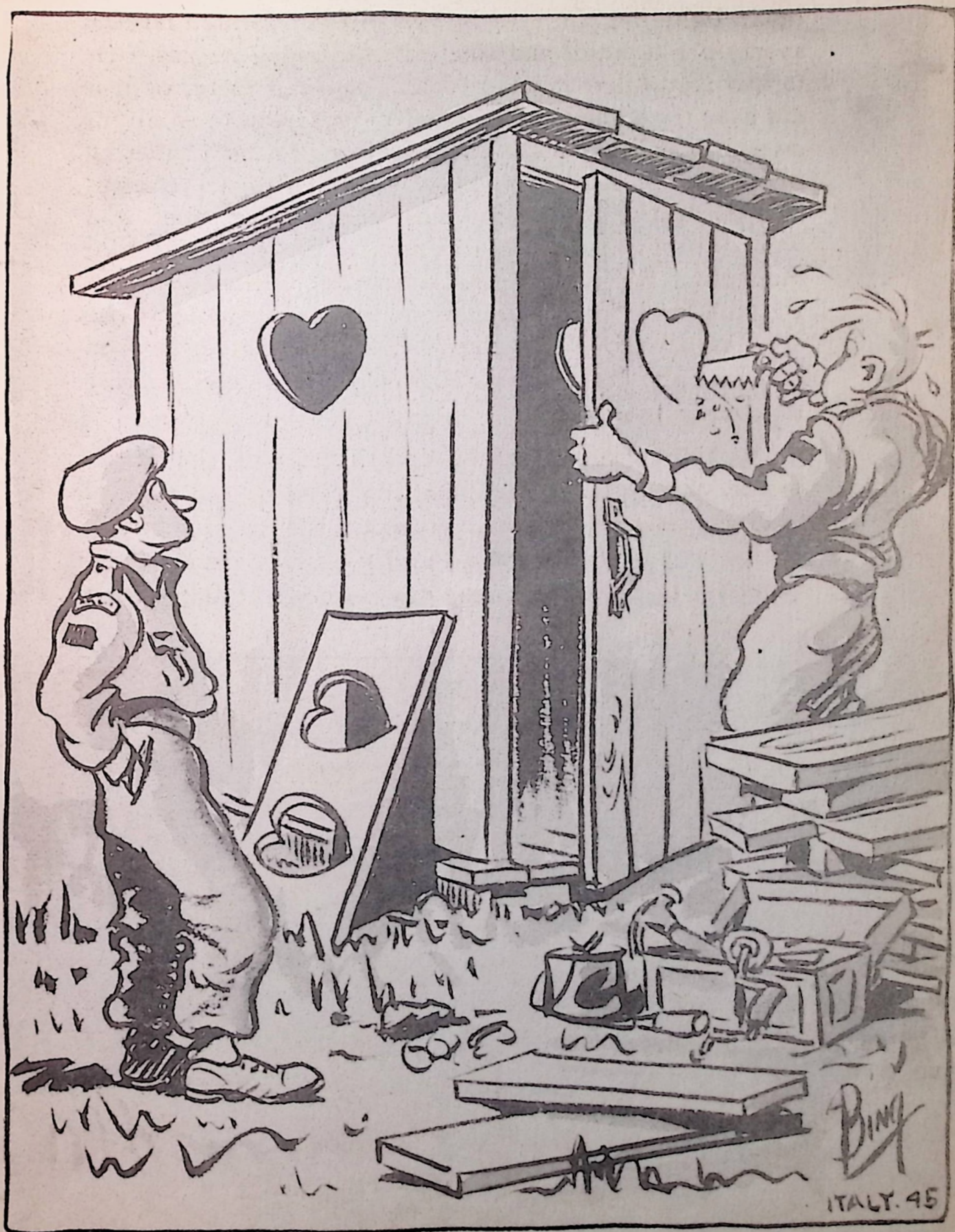
liquid lightning purveyed by the thrifty Norman farmers averaged 140 proof, and smelled like phosgene gas. He further states that it had neither color nor taste, or if it did have taste, the paralyzing effect was enough to blight even the hardiest buds. The behavior of a man suffering from an overdose of Calvados was enough to strike terror into the hearts of even the most experienced toppers and wound stripes were issued to a number of serious cases for internal lacerations. Cigarette lighters, when filled with the stuff, were known to explode in a man's hand at the slightest twitch of the flint. One 36 grenade, hopped up with Calvados, did what Hollywood had kept insisting a grenade would do.

Out of sympathy for the constitution of the future fathers of the nation, the High Command moved most of the Canadians to Belgium where they were able to sip their beer peacefully in the Victory Club in Brussels and ponder over the issues of the day without blowing their

**"PICTURE OR NO PICTURE, I'M  
NOT RUNNIN' PAST THAT OPEN  
SPACE AGAIN FER NO PHOTOG-  
RAPHER!"**







"IN THE SPRING A YOUNG MAN'S FANCY... 'EH, HERBIE?'"



tops every half-hour. Many there were who were given to congratulating themselves on their escape from Calvados canipions, V-1s, 88s and hazards of equal nature, but little did they reckon with the rum they were to encounter in Germany and the Arac in Holland.

The first man able to speak from his hospital bed, after his platoon had captured a cask of German rum, stated on the record that he had discovered the reason for the noticeable deterioration of morale in the Wehrmacht. So impressed were the big brass by this that they forbade further looting in the Reich, with particular emphasis on rum, in the belief that if the Rhine offensive wasn't successful, the German army would eventually drink themselves to death.

Only complaint resulting from this order came from a Canadian hospital in Ghent where the nurses had discovered German rum, testing 70 per cent alcohol, made an excellent back rub and also came in handy when ether,



**"THIS HANDS-ACROSS-  
THE-BORDER STUFF  
CAN GO TOO FAR!"**





"SURE BUD, GO RIGHT AHEAD  
BUT BE CERTAIN YOU SPEAK  
GOOD GERMAN."

"ANOTHER TEN KILOMETERS,  
HERB, BEFORE PORK AND BEANS  
ARE READY!"





*"YOU CAWN'T MISS THE PLYCE  
... FIRST YOU GO TO THE  
ROUNDABOUT ... THEN YOU  
SEE A TURN TO THE RIGHT ...  
DENY YOURSELF THAT TURN ...  
THEN YOU GO A LITTLE FARTHER  
AND THERE'S A TURN TO THE  
LEFT ... . IGNORE THAT ALSO  
... THEN YOU GO TO THE TOP  
OF THE ROAD AND YOU SEE  
ANOTHER TURN TO THE RIGHT  
... . YOU TAKE THAT AND GO  
STRAIGHT AHEAD, AND YOU'LL  
NO MORE FIND IT THAN I WOULD  
IF I WERE LOOKING FOR THE  
PLYCE."*



pentethol and other anaesthesia were in short supply.

Feeling more than slightly rocky from all this discussion of the horrors of war, we fumble through our files and are shaken to find a bottle of (gulp) Arac, product of the blackest stall in the Dutch black market. The night before we suddenly discovered enough points in our hamper to think of home, them stairs and things, we were attracted to a main square in Amsterdam by raucous cries, thunderous explosions and brilliant flashes of light.

We fought our way through the madding throng to find six Canadian braves, hideous in the warpaint of the Iroquois, in the throes of a tribal war dance around a huge bonfire. An empty Arac bottle brandished by one of the jitterbugs was clue sufficient. It even explained the brilliance of the bonfire.

Roll him over gently, men, he's suffering from bottle exhaustion.





"THEY SAY ITS LOUSY WIT' POISON IVY 'ROUND HERE!"



## V

### Yes, We Had No Bananas

It seems every piece that's ever been written about army food or lack of it has managed to involve Napoleon Bonaparte and some crack he was ill-advised enough to make about the stomach being the best means of soldier travel. In the first place, look what happened to Napoleon. And in the second, we've always preferred a staff car when we could scrounge a ride in one. T'hell with Napoleon and his ideas.

The big brass of every army, since Hannibal rode an elephant over the Alps, have managed to ease their guilty consciences by convincing public relations officers to convince war correspondents to convince the folks back home that the boys in their army were the best-fed boys in military history. But the boys have consistently



**"RAISE YA THREE BARS O'SOAP  
AN' I'LL THROW IN THE  
BLONDE'S TELEPHONE NUMBER!"**





"A SALUTE IS ALL THAT'S NECESSARY MEN, — IN FUTURE YOU'LL  
DISPENSE WITH THE LONG LOW WHISTLES!"



and stubbornly remained unconvinced.

A week on bully beef and hardtack, with the luxurious after-dinner smoke of a "V" cigarette, is enough to unconvince anybody.

In order that the civilian populace may not be unduly alarmed at the frequent, ominous rumblings of the veteran innards, a typical army menu is reproduced below so all may know the reason why:

#### BREAKFAST

Egg Cosmetic  
Bacon Limp  
Toast Margarine  
Tea

#### LUNCH

M and V (Stew dehydrated)  
Potatoes Dehydrated  
Prunes  
Bread Demoulded  
Tea

#### DINNER

Soup Strained  
Choice of:  
Bully or Mutton Dehydrated  
Vegetables (See Lunch)  
Pudding, Rice Raisonless  
Biscuits, Tack Hard  
Tea

Bur-r-r-rp!

These sordid details will be enough to explain why patient, unselfish, God-fearing grown-up men were known to raise hand, one against the other, to settle the fate of one lonesome but lovely fresh egg. And why the army





"TH' SARGINTS ARE HOLDIN' ANOTHER PARTY, I PRESUME!"





*"ZIPPER STUCK EH! WHY DON'T  
YA TAKE A PAIR OF PLIERS  
T'BED WITH YA!"*

cooks who managed to escape the shells that were known to fall short, wear the haunted look of a war criminal.

Most Canadian veterans, particularly when prompted by their war brides, will agree that the natives of the United Kingdom are very fine people who live in the nicest pubs. But with a twinge of painful remembrance, they cannot be restrained from moaning low at the thought of British rations. On the question of mutton, for instance, the average Canadian will tell you the British lion lay down with the lamb and never did get up.

The man blamed for devising the British ration scale is reported to have committed suicide by dehydrating himself in a fit of remorse. And well he might. Never in military history has so little caused so much pain to so many. At least one Victoria Cross award is directly attributed to the wild frenzy produced in a man after eight straight days of dehydrated mutton. He had to



**"WHAT'S IN A NAME!"**



**"GIVE US ANOTHER BOTTLE OF  
TH' STUFF Y'SOLD US LAST  
NIGHT. WE'VE A DEMOLISHUN  
JOB ON FER T'DAY!"**



take it out on somebody . . . those poor, dead Germans.

Probably the most feared instrument of torture in the hands of a sadistic army cook, however, was the soya link. Nobody objected to Henry Ford producing automobiles from the soya-bean but all agreed that a spoke from the steering wheel of a V-8 was too much to stomach. Especially, served in grease. 'Tis said a brave young cook made bold to serve cold links in an "A" mess in Belgium and four generals were admitted to hospital with shock. Herbie says: "So soya".

This sort of thing inevitably tested the ingenuity of many a Canadian who hungered for chicken and dumplings, pate de foie gras and such niceties. Impromptu courses were undertaken in butchery, the raising of poultry and how to knock off a heifer at 100 yards on the fly. Of course, many head of livestock were victims of the inhuman Germans with their mortars and mines, and couldn't be left around cluttering up the battlefield. Oft-times, cattle were mortally wounded and suffering terrible pain when the stretcher-bearers went out, and there was nothing to do but put them out of their misery.

This led to such a relief of misery that orders came from one general to milk them first and submit the results to "A" mess, along with the undercut.

Evidence that the loyal holders of the Home Front battle-lines had some inkling of what was going down is seen in the many thousands of food parcels they despatched to their heroes overseas. One gentleman, apparently held in high esteem by the hometown Lions Club, received 67 such separate items during one Christmas week and his cohorts in a general area of 10 kilometres made ready to share in the unveiling of the delights hidden therein.

Much to their amazement, however, the recipient of this goodly number of goodies showed no inclination to part with even a single, delicious morsel. The challenge was apparent.





"THE SARGINT MAJOR SEZ YER SOUP STINKS, — AN' HOW ABOUT GETTIN' SOMEONE ELSE T'WAIT ON TABLES!"



The drooling company commander suddenly realized an urgent need for reconnaissance of a rest area for the unit, something the colonel had obviously overlooked in the hurry and bustle of battle. The best site seemed to be 486 kilometres to the south, said the company commander, and who below the rank of major was to question his sagacity.

Hardly had the parcel king departed on the reconnaissance when the assault platoon, heavily-armed with cans of spam, pilchards and the revolting like, made a frontal attack on the groceries. With creditable finesse, they undertook certain exchanges in 64 parcels, resealed and retied same, and departed burdened down with such delicacies as canned chicken, pears, sandwich spread, peanut butter, B.C. salmon and cheddar cheese.

The Lions are still wondering why this guy put in for a transfer to the Rotary Club.

\* \* \* \*



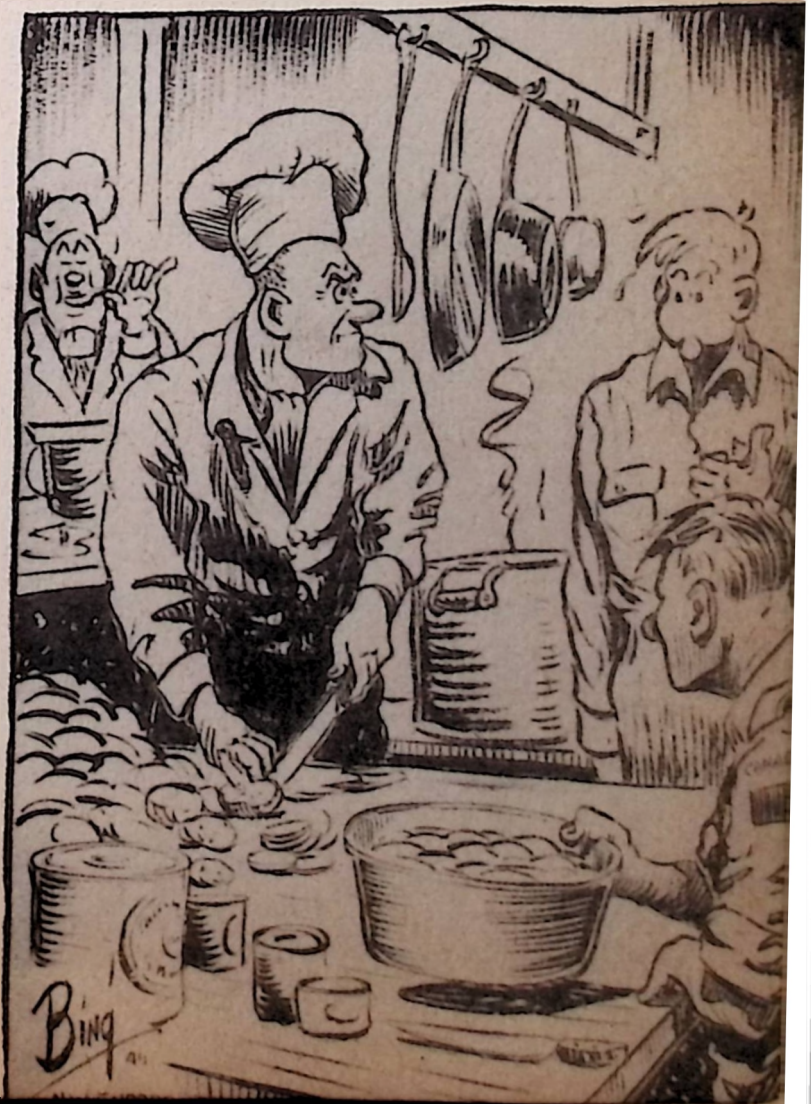
**"BORROWED IT EH! — AN' NO DOUBT YER ALSO PERSONAL FRIENDS OF THE GENERAL!"**





**"EVERY TIME WE GET KITCHEN  
FATIGUE, THE COOK RUNS OUT'A  
DEHYDRATED SPUDS!"**

**"THE M.O. WANTS T'SEE THE  
GUY WHO ASKED FER SECONDS  
ON DRIED EGG AND SOYA LINKS  
THIS MORNIN'!"**





**"TRY IT NOW SARGE!"**



So shattering to the morale of the troops did the army fare become that, in near-panic, the War Office authorized formation of a new and highly-specialized branch of the service, known to the embittered members of the war establishment committee as the catering corps. The members of this corps were extremely scientific operators, having gained wide experience washing dishes in restaurants or serving beer in ladies' beverage rooms. So it was understandable that before long they should come up with an absolutely foolproof method of camouflaging the taste of bully beef.

It was with pride that a catering corps sergeant, after testing no less than 50 methods, advised:

"Bury the bloody stuff."

\* \* \* \*

Any seconds, Mom?





N.W. EUROPE 45

"A PAIN IN YOUR ABDOMEN! . . . . YOUNG MAN, OFFICERS HAVE ABDOMENS, SERGEANTS HAVE STOMACHS, . . YOU HAVE A BELLYACHE!"

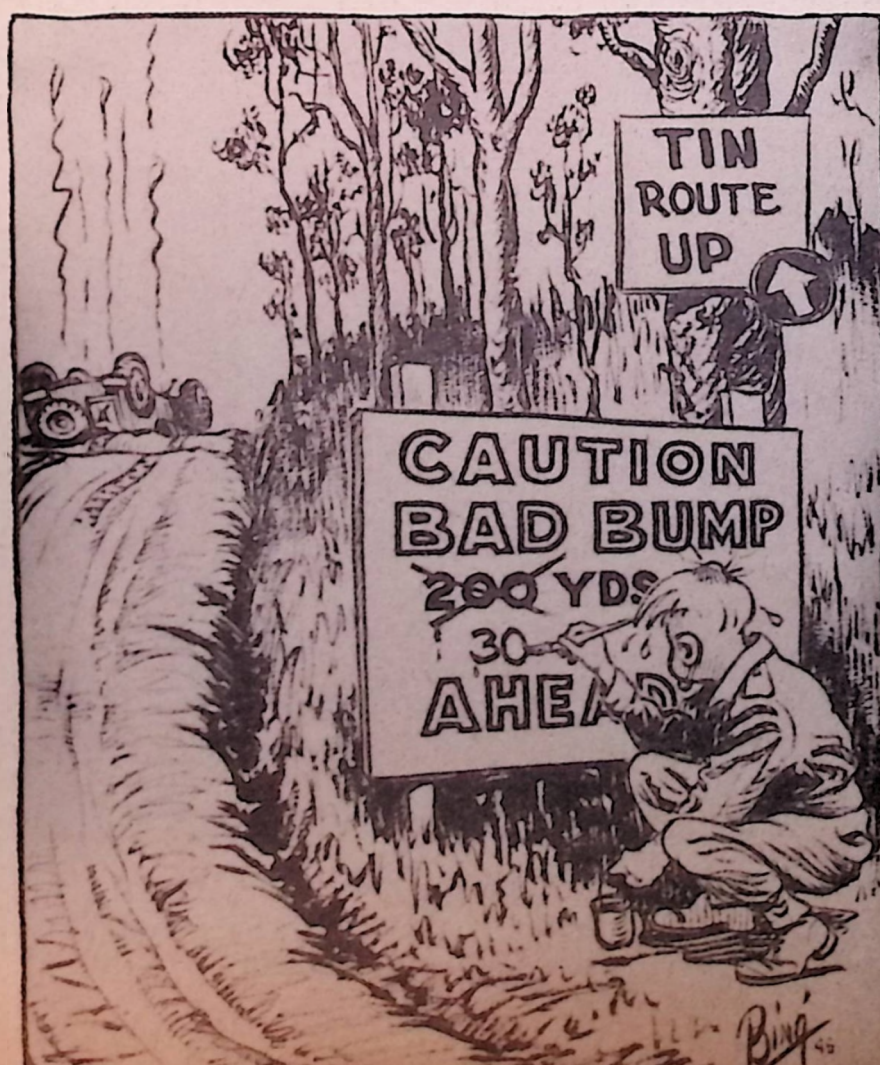


## VI

### *It's Loaded With Blanks*

It was not realized until well on in the war that the vocabulary of the average Canadian stalwart was limited to something like 68 words, colorful though they may be. This resulted in a certain amount of repetition which proved rather trying to the more cultured types, particularly the padres. Soldiers were prone to split infinitives, dangle participles and generally give the English language a kicking around through the constant use of a word or words that would burn the ears off Amber . . . forever.

Many an appeal was issued to the troops to desist from continual employment of certain highly-flavored and descriptive words. One of the terms of reference in the establishment of the army educational services was that

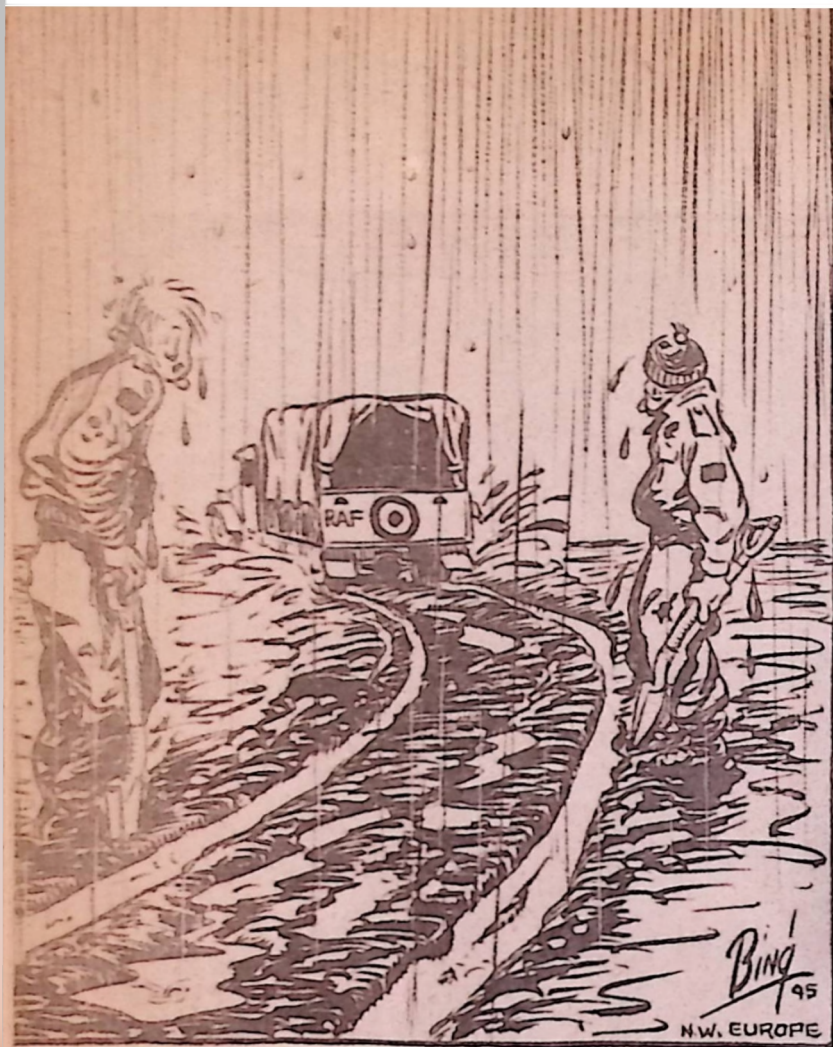






"SIR! HAVE Y'GOT AN ACCIDENT REPORT FORM?"





*"I WISH THEY'D STICK TO AIR-PLANES!"*

suitable substitutes be offered in the way of adjectives, exclamations and figures of speech. Two months later, educational supervisors agreed that it was no - - - - - use trying.

This distinctive vernacular led to a certain amount of embarrassment in England's more restrained clubs. One member of a sergeants' mess who had the audacity to complain that he was losing all sense of conversational values, was immediately bust to private and told by the regimental sergeant major to keep his - - - mouth - - - well closed.

If the men from Drift Pile, Alta., and Lumby, B.C., and other well-known centres of activity lacked the colorful phraseological variety of the Mississippi river boatmen, they made up for it with the emphasis born of conviction. When they informed you what to do with an unwanted article, for instance, there was never any question as to their meaning. One sincere lad was immediately snapped





BELGIUM 45

"I WUZ TOLD THAT DOWN BURMA WAY THEY DON'T WEAR  
BOOTS, AN' IT'S TOO HOT FER BLANKETS AND THE CIGARET  
MARKET IS NIL! . . . GRIM SHOW!"



up as a contortionist by the manager of an army show during an attempt to perform an anatomical impossibility ordered by his sergeant.

Any embarrassment apt to be incurred by the local population was removed, however, when der fuehrer called off his plans for the invasion of the Isles and the Canadians found it necessary to go hun hunting. On the contrary, many of the natives of countries in Continental Europe were so anxious to show their co-belligerent or allied spirit, as the case may have been, that they quickly added to their own language certain basic expressions the liberators brought with them.

This often produced such unusual greetings from the friendly peasants as - - - - -, Joe; Go to - - -, you - - - - ; - - - - - - - - -, or Cigarette for Papa? Really getting into the spirit of things, three Russian prisoners, released by the Allied advance from the west, greeted their liberators with - - - you, - - - me, I'm talking - - - English, Tovarich.

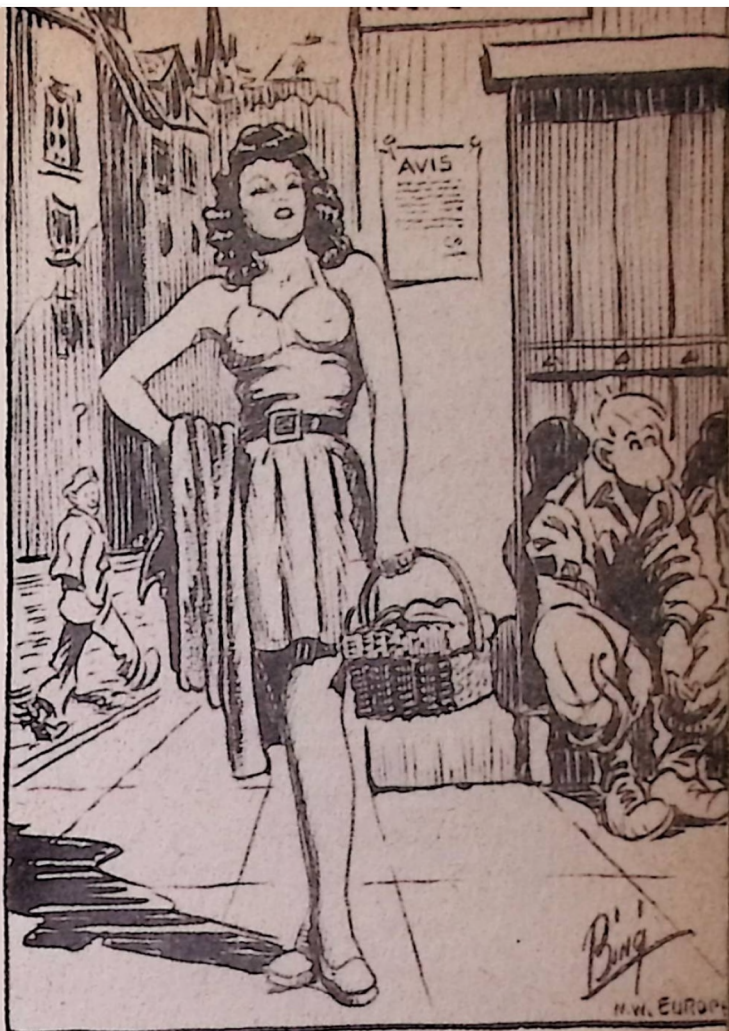
Ancestry or lack of it, of course, was a popular topic of conversation in military circles. Canadian soldiers were a bit taken aback on arrival in Rome, with its statue of Romulus and Remus, to discover that at least two really were, and termed it only further justification of the thought that almost anything could happen in Italy and usually did.

Association with the forces of other nations served to remove any doubt from the mind of the Canadian that he was on the wrong track. Certain terms are indeed basic and can be invaluable in removing the confusion prompted by use of words which may be okay in one language and anything but naice in the same one. If you don't believe it, ask Fanny.

The foreign language pickup wasn't just one way. Multi soldati Canadese parlent Francais sehr gute, or somethin'. To proceed, many Canadians showed a



**"I WONDER IF SHE'S GOT ANY  
EGGS IN THAT BASKET!"**



**"WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, PICK UP  
SIX CASES OF BLANCO, FIVE  
GALLONS OF BRASS POLISH,  
COUPLA DRUMS OF GREEN  
PAINT."**



*"SHE MUST BE IN LOVE WIT'  
ME, ONLY T'DAY SHE STARTED  
CALLIN' ME PET NAMES LIKE, —  
SALE, COCHON!"*



marked ability for acquiring a working knowledge of native lingo, even mastering such intricate phrases as "Dove voi casa, signorina?" and "Pas bon." This aptitude went unrecognized for its military value until a Canadian armoured brigade was used in a support role with an Indian division in Italy. The Indian troops couldn't talk English, the Canadians couldn't talk Indian, not even North American Indian. So broken, battered and bruised Italian was used to exchange information necessary to operations.

The troopers take delight in describing how it worked. A tribesman from Ghandiland, mid the heat of battle, would rap on the side of a tank with his Lee-Enfield, gesticulate wildly in the direction of the opposition, explain "Casa (house) rosso (red or pink) multi Tedeschi (many Germans) possible trente (possibly 30) non buono (not good)." He and his pals would then just about knock themselves out, laughing in glee and wahooing:





"DEAR MR. BAILEY . . . . ."



"Buonissimo, buonissimo" when the tank proceeded to blast the hell out of the house and contents.

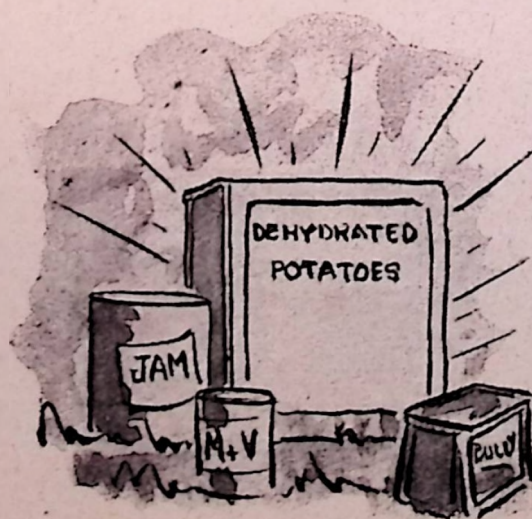
Definitely a new wrinkle in combined operations.

While the army may not have been as inventive as the air force when it came to terminology, it did bring new meaning to quite a few words and stole many more from the Limeys who seemed to have a knack that way. For example, words like "character" and "episode" came in for big play with the lads and, for a time, everything from a night patrol to a night in the Montmartre was an episode and you could be sure quite a few characters were involved either way.

Thus it is not unduly surprising nor confusing to hear emanating from a huddle strategically positioned in a Canadian brew dispensary:

"Remember that --- --- sergeant-major at that --- holding unit. There was a --- character. He'd had it, the ---. The two --- weeks I spent in that --- place, what a --- episode. Nobody knew the --- score. What a --- bunch of --- Frontline Charlies. Somebody shudda put them in the --- picture, the ---s."

Two up!







"YUP, WE'RE CANADIANS, — AN' INCIDENTALLY WE AINT BEEN NEAR ALDERSHOT FOR TWO YEARS!"



## VII

### *Put The Harness on the Horse, Son*

And the Devil said to the gent in the high collar and the old school tie: "What did you do to cause misery on Earth?"

And the gent replied: "I invented web equipment."

And the Devil said: "What a performance, what a monster! You have caused misery to millions. You have indeed qualified. We'll give you a new house in Veterans' Row. The torture should be something to see. Yuk, yuk. Take him away, sergeant-major."

One of the pleasing features of the army is that, if something is obviously wrong, the big brass will see that it's remedied . . . even if it takes years. So it was no surprise to Canadian troops to learn, shortly after hos-



**"SO THE ARMY CAN'T MAKE US  
DO ANYTHIN' WE DON'T WANNA  
DO! . . . . THEY SURE CAN MAKE  
US WISH WE HAD!"**





"HEADS OR TAILS?"



**"QUIT YER BEEFIN' — BY THE  
TIME Y'GIT HOME YOU'LL BE  
AN EXPERT GEOLOGIST!"**



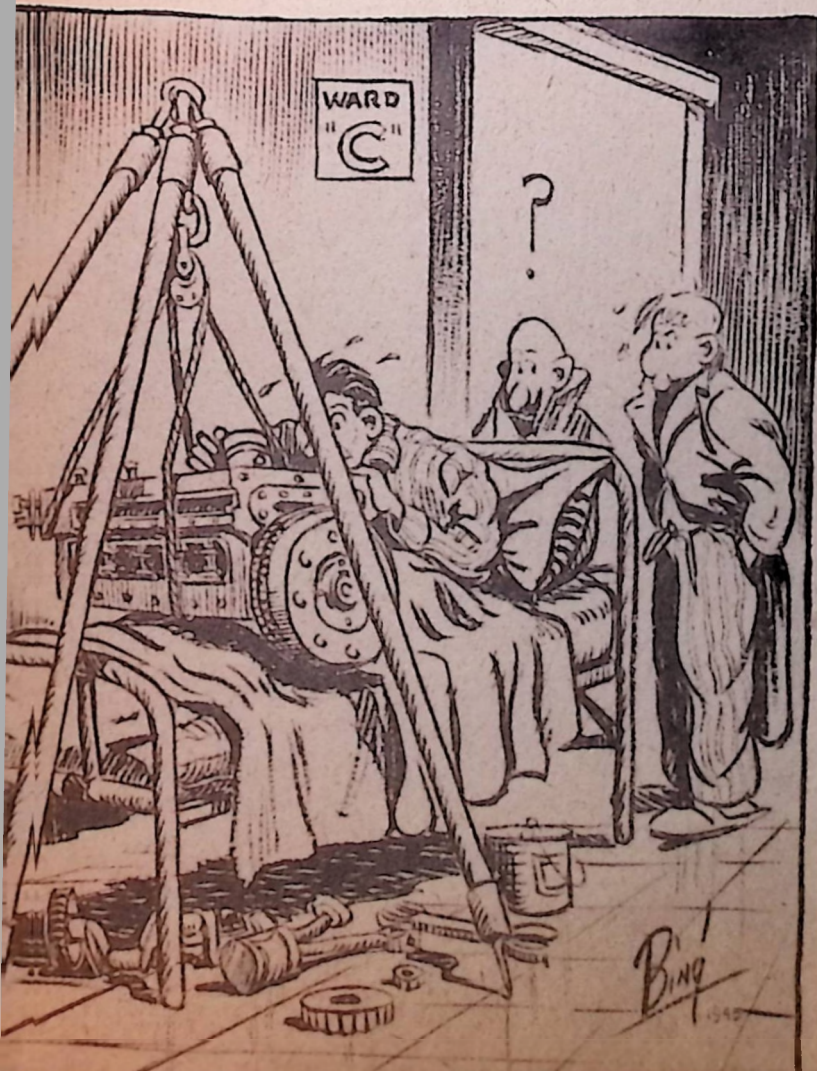
ilities had been concluded in Europe, that the War Office had agreed to the necessity for certain changes in soldier equipment. Veterans of the Boer War will undoubtedly appreciate what gratification greeted the announcement that, after only 5½ years of war, certain inadequacies and faulty arrangements had been discovered. Oh joy, a brand new set of web had been included in the preview of fall fashions. Why there were even pictures in some of the soldier magazines, showing the old and the new, and a story telling about all the painstaking research that had produced the innovations.

Of course, there were some old meanies who suggested that, if some of these researchers had been involved in a 25-mile route march with full pack, it would have been painstaking enough and the changes would have been made in time to do some good. Some soldiers are always grouching.

Many a patriotic youth, fresh from the farm and sure



"I ONCE GOT BATTED IN THE  
EYE FER CALLIN' A NICE GIRL  
SISTER!"



"WOULDN'T CHA THINK HE'D BE  
SATISFIED T'KNIT, OR SUMPIN'  
SIMPLER?"



in his own mind that harness was reserved for horses, was quickly disillusioned by a leering quartermaster-sergeant who threw in his astonished face a weird assortment of bits and pieces known to the trade as webbing. This, Herbie explains, is because it makes you waddle like a duck. However, to continue . . .

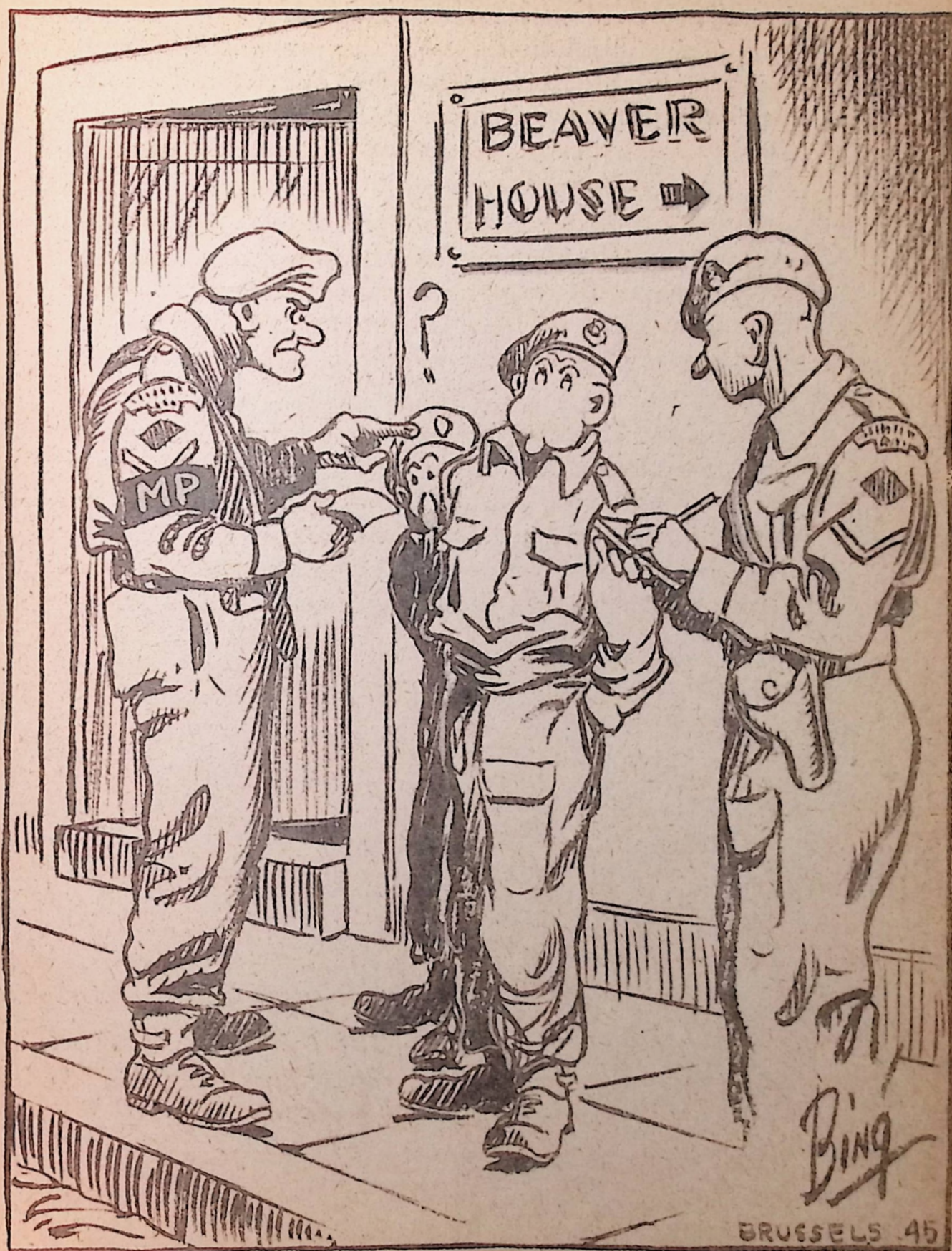
No sooner had our hero managed to assemble the various items as per pamphlet, no mean trick in itself, than he was introduced to an ointment called blanco and other more descriptive but less complimentary things. So your web is nice and new and clean, so you blanco it anyway, see!

The potential soldier usually came to the conclusion that, no matter what the adjustment or the thickness of the blanco, this equipment, ostensibly designed to permit him to take up his bed and walk, wouldn't fit and shouldn't happen to the aforementioned horses. And when he was told the Army Council was so proud



**"THE FIRST THING I WANNA  
DO WHEN I GIT HOME IS FIND  
THE SABOTEUR WHO INVENTED  
ELASTICLESS SUSPENDERS AND  
M AND V . . .!"**





"AND WE'LL NOT HAVE ANY MORE OF THIS — HERE COMES TH' GESTAPO STUFF!"



of the whole business, it insisted that the brass on it be polished, well . . . . .

His will having been broken by his sergeant, who was great for polishing things including apples, the number was ready for the final treatment, specially designed by Frankenstein's offspring operating under the guise of chemical warfare experts. Respirators, cape, wallet, eye-shields, detectors, ointment, oh the agony of it all. Few people ever had a real good whiff of chlorine gas but it couldn't have been much worse than lugging around the protection against it.

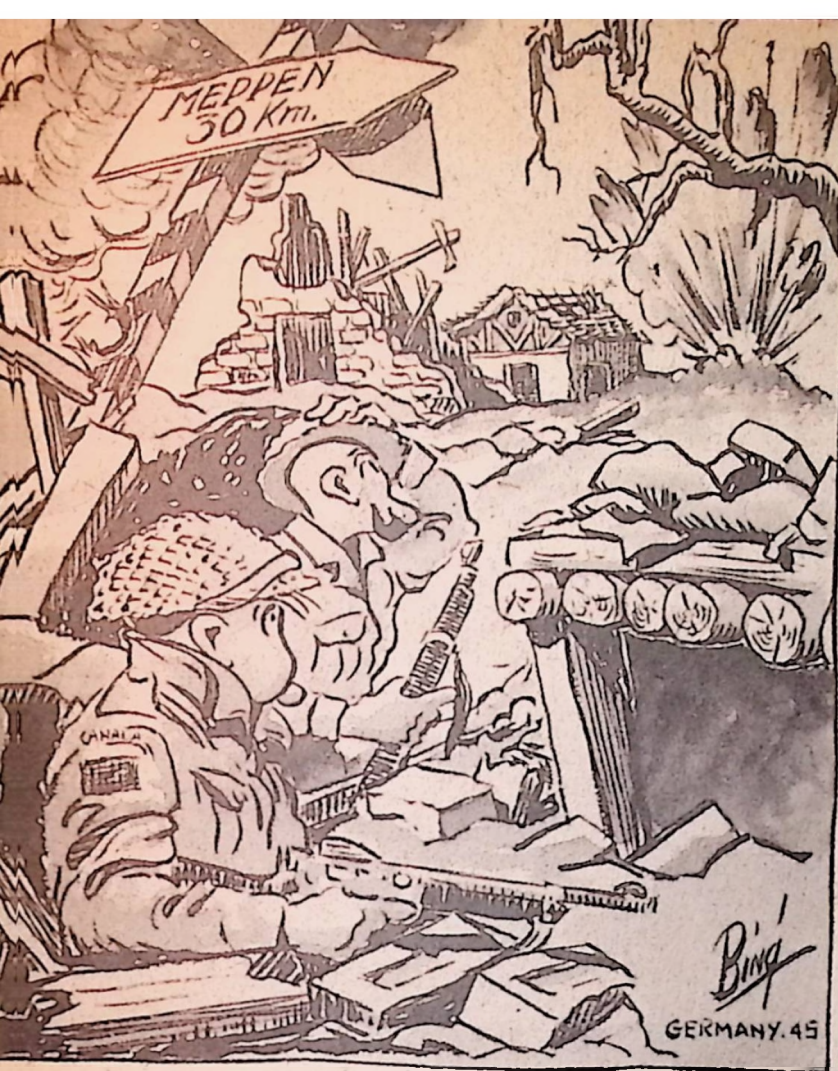
The respirator must have been the brain-child of a very breathless child. The cape must have been the product of a navy knot school. The wallet could be used for shaving kit. The eye-shields could be used for dust. But the detectors and ointment weren't even good for the itch.

Lest this piece be regarded as critical, it is pointed



"BETCHA WE DON'T MOVE TODAY, 'CAUSE IT AINT RAININ' AND IT AINT SUNDAY, AND THE OLE MAN HAS A HANGOVER."





"WHAT I WANT TO GIT MOST  
OUT OF THIS WAR .. IS ME!"

"STEP ON IT? ? ... AN' RUIN  
MY TIRES ON THIS ROAD!"





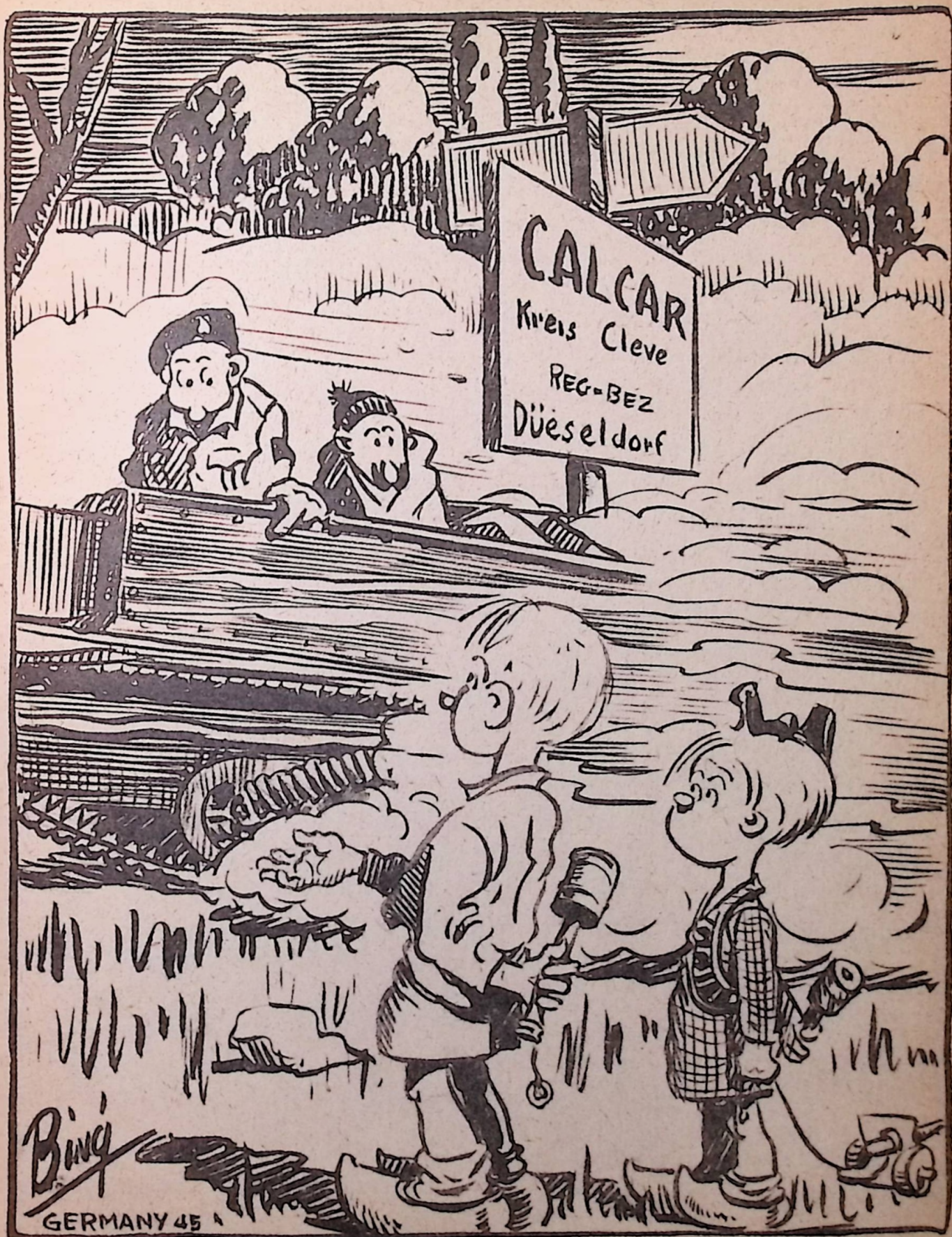
*"WONDER IF THAT APPLIES TO  
PIGS AS WELL?"*



out in haste that, midway through the war, somebody in authority actually tried to fire a rifle while wearing a respirator. It being immediately apparent to this keen investigator that such an operation was not for normal man, a brand new streamlined deluxe two-tone model was issued—just in time to coincide with Allied assurance that the German High Command was so far behind the 8-ball it wouldn't dream of using gas.

With this off his mind and the popularity of respirators as civilian soup strainers assured on Continental Europe, the soldier had only such problems left to contend with as how to get rid of his big pack and still carry a bottle of vino, or how to make rum stop leaking out of a water bottle that wouldn't even hold water. Substitution of a captured opposition water bottle, which would hold rum, was sternly frowned upon, even if admittedly practical. And use of American mess tins was termed highly undesirable in that it fostered the fork in the right





"NICE LITTLE KIDS, EH HERBIE!"



hand, which any well-bred Permanent Force brigadier will tell you is no place for the fork.

But the Canadian soldier had this consolation, his boots were something of which to be proud. They were so good they could be made over into two pair of civilian shoes . . . and sometimes were. The way generous Canadians gave away their second-to-last pair of boots to needy Europeans would have touched your heart. The Europeans were so touched that they gave the Canadians their second-to-last two bottles of cognac in return. As a matter of fact, everybody was touched except the provost who were only issued with one pair of boots and were understandably annoyed about the whole thing.

In case this consolation tends to be misleading, we turn back to such sordid subjects as helmets, shirts with permanently detached collars, NAAFI combs and ATS underwear. Not that we've got anything against ATS underwear on ATS. As a matter of important record, we know absolutely nothing about ATS underwear on ATS. But a grievous mistake somewhere in the master plan diverted thousands of these unmentionables into Canadian quarter stores. The quarter blokes hitched up their Hickoks and proceeded to issue the cellulose cut-outs in glee. Little did they think it would lead to such barrack-room chatter as the following:

"Coo, ducks, have you heard about Georgie?"

"Oh, Marvin, has he been sassing the colonel again?"

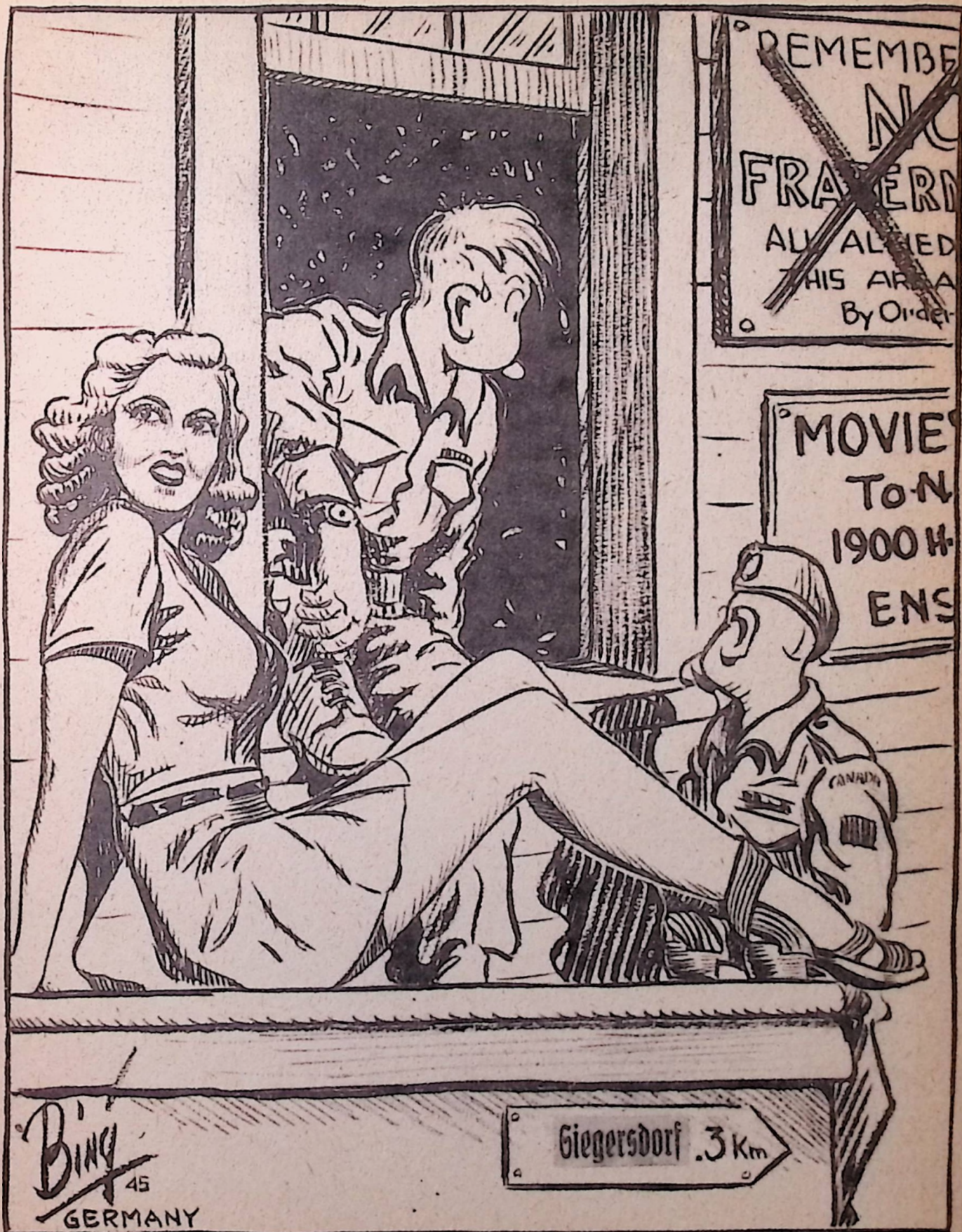
"Oh, nothing like that, Rupert. He's making a big you-know-what for that sergeant. The one with the pretty cowlick."

"My, my, that *is* news, Marvin."

"Yes, and what's more, I hear our corporal is just as jealous as . . . well, really, it's a caution. How's my hair in the back, Rupert?"

"Just lovely, Marvin. That upsweep is so right."





"NOW THAT THE BAN'S BEEN LIFTED, SHE WON'T FRATERNIZE!"



Shows you what it'll do to a man.

To those unfortunate enough to have been shipped through the straits that are Gibraltar, the great unveiling that followed issue of such tropical worsted numbers as bush shirts, slacks and shorts will long be remembered. The shorts were the payoff. A survey revealed the most varied collection of underpinnings ever foisted on the human race, and many a signorina's heart did a jump beat at the sight of such display of masculine meat. The Canadian flare for the expression of the individual prompted one man to wear them like a skirt around a tent peg, another like a pair of Junior's diapers. Some were real pretty. Some were revolting.

But woe betide the one who would ridicule. The male is sensitive about such things.

Bright in the memory is this slight international incident on Via Roma, main stem of Naples. The usual conglomeration of humanity was shoving its way up and down the thoroughfare when three young American sailors, fresh off a boat and one over the eight, spied two huskies from the First Division artillery attired in ventilators.

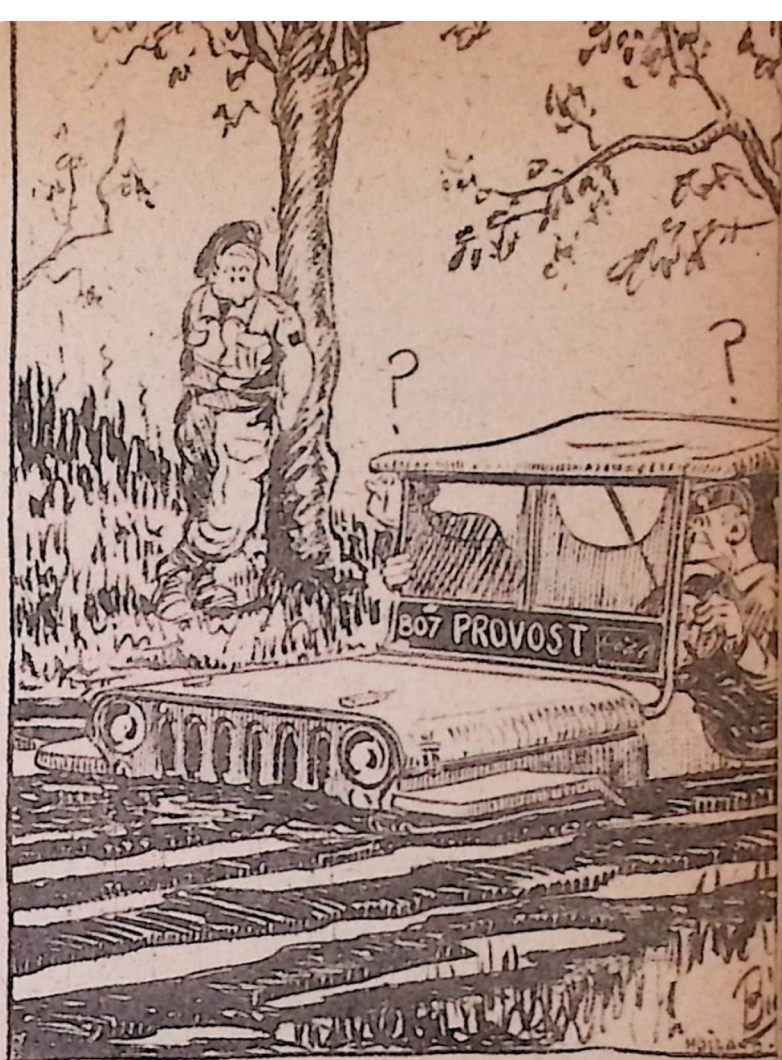
Now the gunners were minding their own business, holding up a wall and whistling softly from time to time at various bits of local color. But the navy was in a mood to make fun and the bolder of the three weaved into the general area and, hand on hip, minced: "My, you look pretty in them pants. How about a date, dearie?"

The reaction was rapid and rugged. Somebody started a KO count. The sailor's pals took another look at the arty gents, still leaning gently against the wall, picked the bundle of blue off the pavement and dragged him away muttering: "That'll teach the sunnuvabi:ch to keep his mouth shut." What a punch!

\* \* \* \*

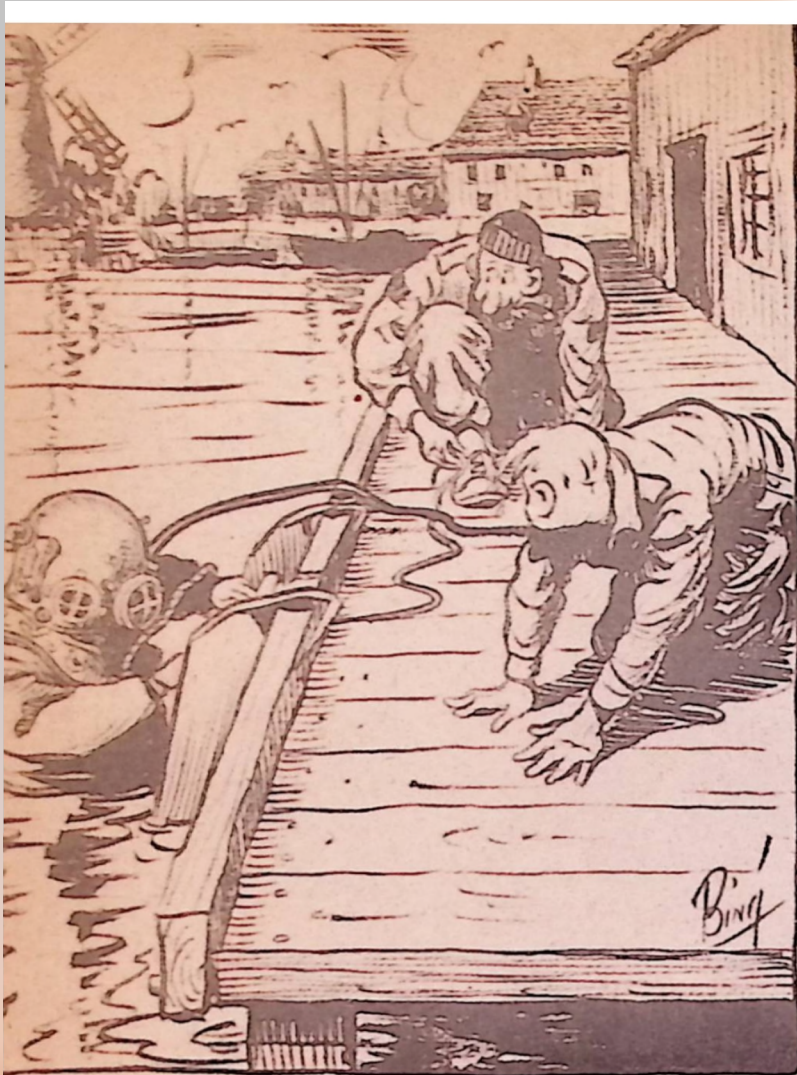


**"YA TRIED FOUR-WHEEL DRIVE  
YET?"**



**"LOOK! HE'S PRACTICALLY A  
MILLIONAIRE HE FOUND A CASE  
OF SOAP."**





*"HE SEZ THERE AINT NO JEEP  
DOWN THERE, SO WE MUSTA  
PARKED IT SOME OTHER PLACE!"*

All this, says a man who was there, recalls the day when the issue of summer ensemble was first assured for an armoured division known wide and far as the "Big Maroon Machine."

Winter time in Italy will rank in a Canadian's mind as long as he remembers his first January in Aldershot or that biffie on the snow-clad downs. So it isn't hard to visualize a day when the grey-green leaves of the knarled olive trees whispered among themselves, sounding to the chilled ears of the shivering ranks below like powdered ice blowing across the surface of a frozen lake.

On that particular day, each man shifted in a vain attempt to find a more friendly spot of ooze in which to deposit his saturated anchors. They huddled in the lee of their own hunched shoulders and thought of nothing, as men will whose minds are loaded with utter discomfort. The snow drifted heavily down, as though the gods were wilfully plucking at the dull grey matting of the sky.





"COULD SAVE PLENTY OF TIME BY SIMPLY MARCHIN' A BUNCH OF THESE LUGS ACROSS THE FIELD!"



It was a day which would have sent Poe hurrying forth in search of some dank tarn for inspiration. It was a day for log fires seen through the perfumed steam of hot rum toddies. It was a day for Ike Marvel or Henry James, and the drowsy somnolence of complete peace within doors while the ghouls of weather howled without.

The men moved nowhere save up and down. They stood and shivered until their turn came to face the blue, weather-tightened visage of the quarter bloke.

And then, in answer to his question, with lips stiffened by the cold, each mumbled his answer: "Summer shorts—size medium; summer shirt—size 2."

It never failed to happen.

In view of the fact that this chapter has some slight relation to army equipment, we take this opportunity to incur the undying animosity of the manufacturers of that bane of the human anatomy, sometimes identified

**"YEP, THEY'RE ICICLES — THE  
COLONEL TOLD HIM HE WUZ  
FROZEN!"**







**"CANALS, CANALS, — ALWAYS CANALS, — NEVER ANY ORDINARY  
STREETS!"**

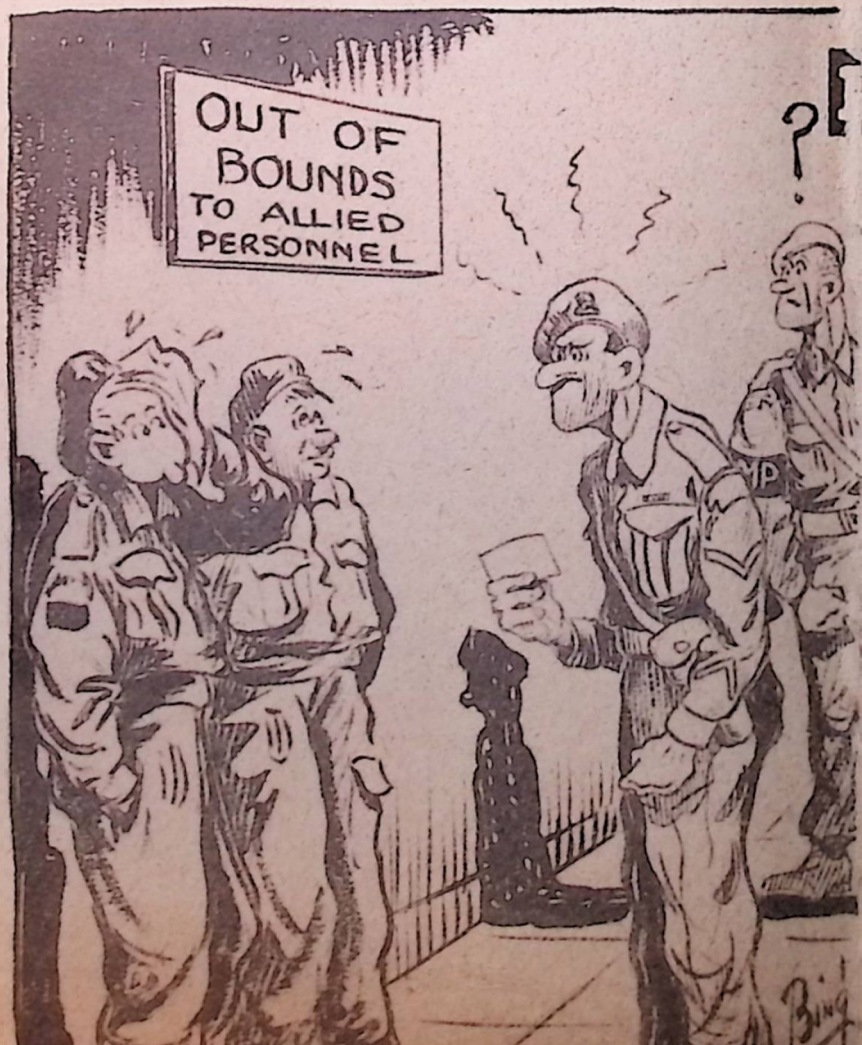


as a 5 cwt. but more often cussed as a jeep. Just to show that we're not prejudiced, much, we'll admit at the first drop of a shock absorber that the jeep is in a class with the Bailey Bridge, German 88 and the Atomic Bomb when it comes to war discoveries. It got a lot of people from here to there who would otherwise have stayed here. But, oh-h-h, the pain.

Never in the history of man, with all his misfortunes, has such a beating been administered to the posterior. Some guys came out of this war with a reputation of being able to stand and take it. Phooey! They couldn't sit down. The jeep, in itself, should be sufficient explanation to baffled wives who can't figure out why their Joes persist in sleeping on their stomachs.

Hah, we can remember the time when jeeps were going for a bottle of Scotch in the Algiers black market. No more rotor arms and lead wires for us. We'll waive our priority. Let civilians know some of the hell that was war.

**"A FLATFOOT! — NO SIREE, WE'D NEVER THINK OF CALLIN' A RESPECTABLE MILITARY POLICEMAN THAT, — SPECIALLY A CORPORAL WIT' A GOOD CONDUCT BADGE!"**







"NOW THAT THE WAR IS OVER WE'LL BE SOON LEAVING FOR  
UNCLE HERBIE'S BIG RANCH IN TORONTO!"



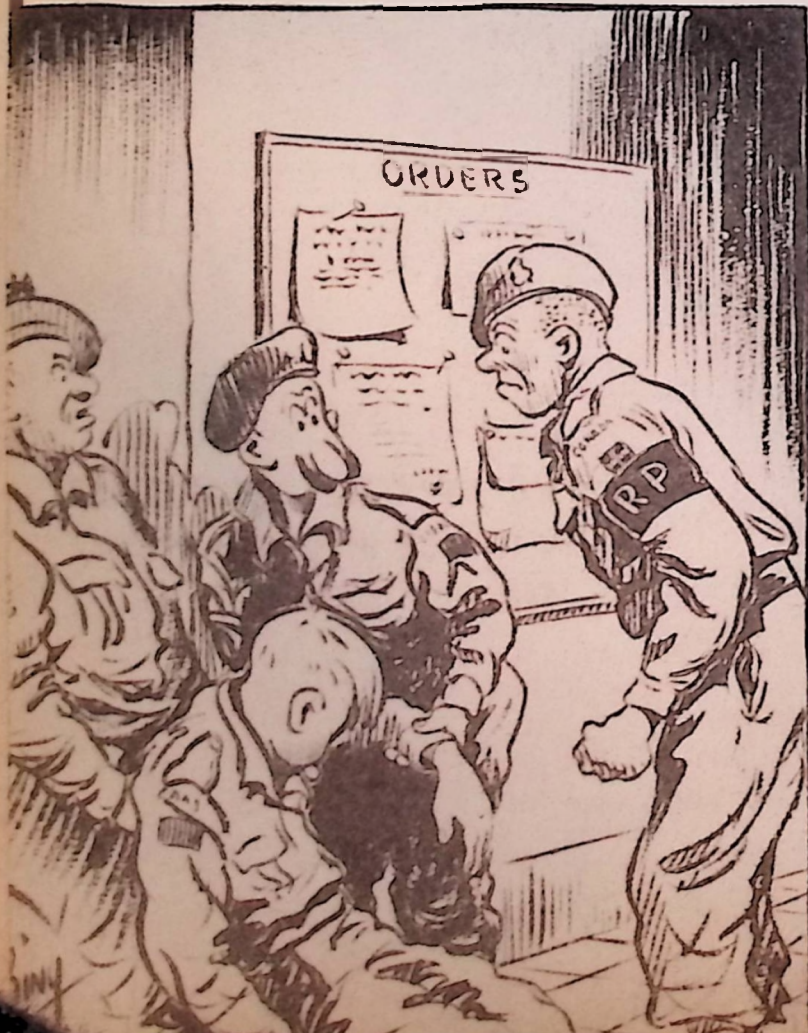
## VIII

### *And He Had an Helmet of Brass Upon His Head*

The story has come our way of a brigadier, impressed with the importance of his position, who was given to inspecting his troops from a dappled grey charger, jabbing with a riding crop at various individuals whose attire failed to meet with his pleasure. These various individuals resented being jabbed at, the horse, the brigadier and the whole idea.

So the heads went together and . . .

One of the bejabbed lads had been an apiarist of considerable talent in happier days and he contrived to insert in his pack, in some amazing fashion known only to the bee and honey fraternity, a hive of exceedingly rebellious hornets. Such an insertion made a rather noticeable bulge in the pack, and . . .



**"DRUNK ME EYE! . . . THE  
SARGINT JEST TOLD HIM HE'S  
ON DRAFT TO GO HOME!"**



"YUP THIS IS ALL PERSONAL STUFF, MY REGULAR KIT IS IN MY SMALL PACK!"



"MIGHT AS WELL LEAVE THAT STUFF BEHIND CHUM, — Y'AIN'T IN ITALY ANY MORE!"



The next day this brigadier is aridin' around when he notices the unsightly contour. He rears his horse up ever so close and roars to the sergeant: "What's in that pack? Open it up, man! This is disgraceful. Open it up!" So the sergeant, a bit baffled by a strange buzzing within, gingerly undoes the tabs as the brig. leans over to peer within, and WHAM!

The last seen of the brigadier, he was being transported west at the gallop. The last seen of the hornets, they were going along for the ride. The last seen of the apiarist, he was hitchhiking to Siberia. The last seen of the sergeant, he was wondering why he hadn't gone with the apiarist.

This yarn is not to be taken as an indication that most brigadiers rode around on dappled grey chargers nosing into people's packs. On the contrary, most of them had staff cars. Nor is it evidence that soldiers held any animosity towards some brigadiers, any more than they did against some full colonels and generals.

It has been our lot to be associated with little and big brass from time to time and we can truthfully report that, for the most part, they treated us in the kindly manner customarily reserved for necessary evils. It was certainly awe-inspiring to hear a general command his quaking aide-de-camp: "Get the hell out and get me four bottles of whiskey. I don't care where you get it, but get it!", and know all the time that the guys at the mobile bath had just finished drinking the last bottle for a radius of 203 kilometres.

Then again there were those heartening orders-of-the-day like "The Hun is beaten. Kick him in the crotch!", when you knew that, if the Hun was beaten, nobody seemed to have told him about it. And, as a matter of fact, you were feeling more than slightly crochety yourself. But the show had to go on, old boy. Etc.

\* \* \* \*





"WELL!"



It was strange to see what the addition of a couple of pieces of red cloth and a bit of gold braid to a uniform could do to some hitherto harmless characters. It set them apart and, in many cases, the farther apart the better. But they wouldn't stay there. They insisted on mingling with any troops that happened to be handy at the most inconvenient moments, particularly in rest. And there's nothing like a restful little inspection by the brass to keep the boys happy.

A tank regiment from out of the West, noted for the ingenuity of its commanding officer, figured out a new system for welcoming high priority performers. There were three roads linking their area in Holland to the outside world. Two of them they worked over with Sherman tanks until the potholes were small canyons. At a strategic point on the third, they erected a sign: "Danger! Mines! Closed to All Traffic!"

Peace, it was wonderful.

\* \* \* \*

Some of the members of the higher income brackets had a very peculiar way of expressing themselves. They were always bringing down a stonk on somebody. They were always sure the troops had their tails well up and were quick so to inform visiting politicians, even if the tired tails of the troops were leaving deep furrows all over the battlefield. They could make you almost sick to your stomach by explaining that such and such a unit needed to be blooded. A nice word, blooded. They laid on, they finalized, they phased in. It may have been the language of Camberley and Haifa. It certainly wasn't Canadian.

\* \* \* \*

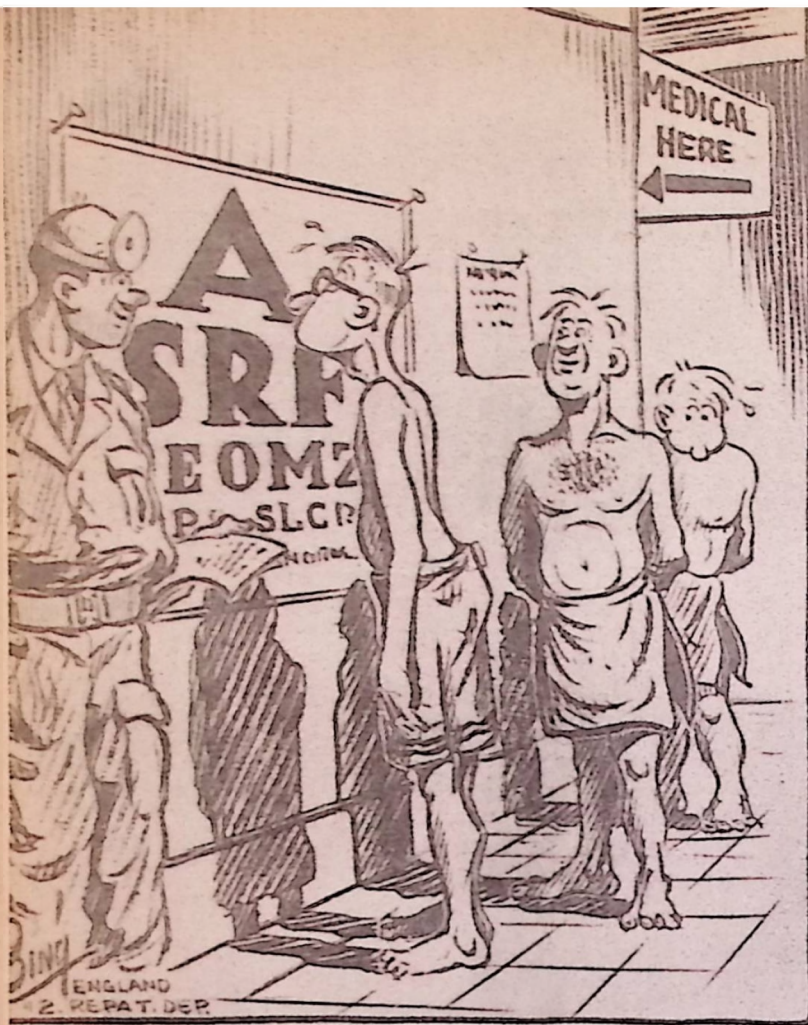
Inefficiency prompted some rather strange developments among the brass, particularly early on in the war. Mistakes obviously weren't confined to colonel and above. Human frailty took care of that. But certain individuals





"AN' THE TWO PURTY ONES IN THE MIDDLE IS FER, FRANCE-GERMANY AN' ITALY, THEY DIDN'T SAY WHAT THE LITTLE ONE ON THE END WUZ FER!"



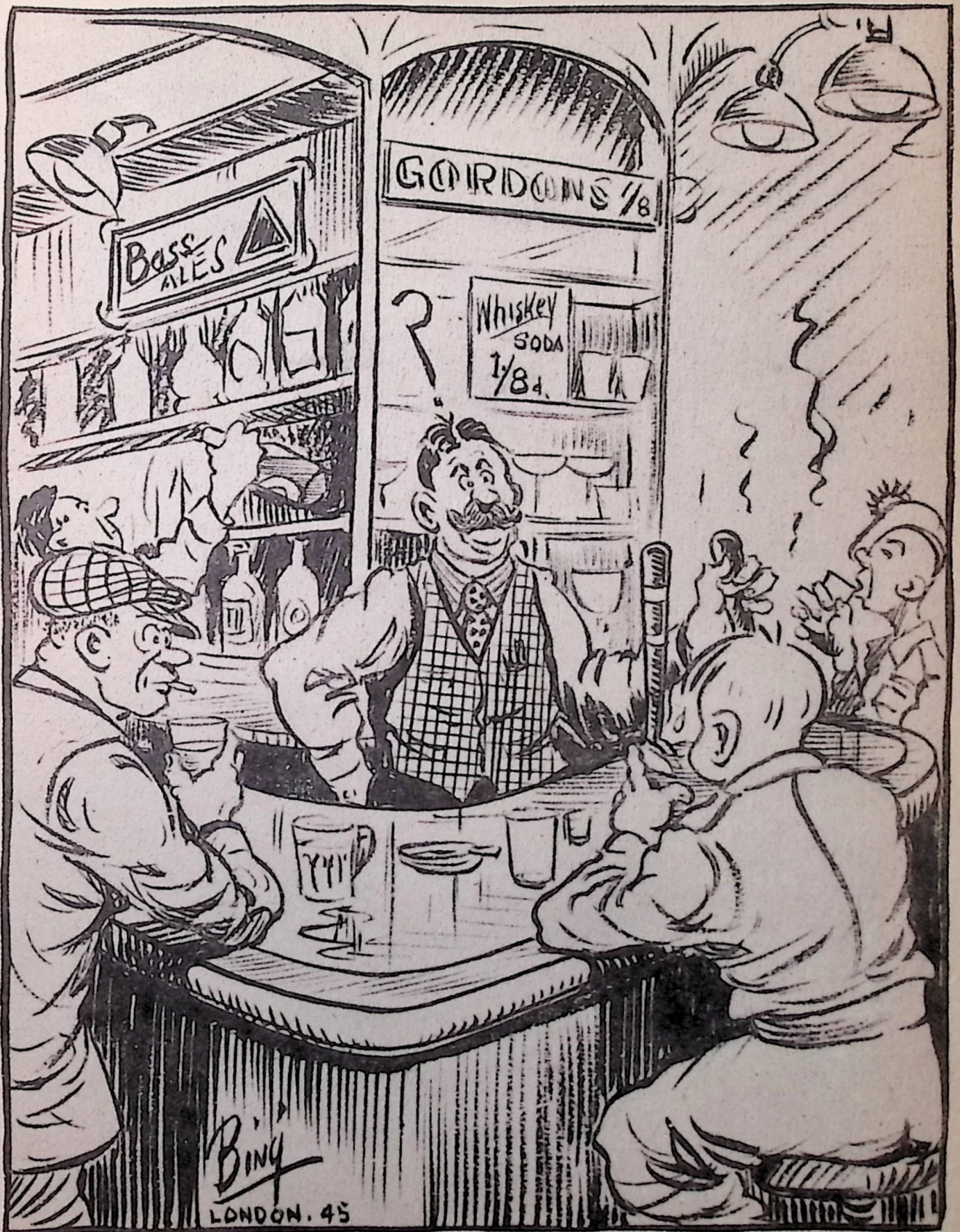


were paid fancy salaries, supplied with elaborate amenities few would have enjoyed in civilian life, and were expected to produce accordingly. But this is what often happened:

\* \* \* \*

Which is not to say that there weren't some good guys among the brass. How it happened still has us a trifle amazed. But we know this piece won't annoy these good guys because good guys usually know a good guy when they see one, and they're bound to know themselves





"LET ME HAVE ANOTHER ONE OF THOSE DOWN PAYMENTS ON A HEADACHE!"



as good guys and not to be discussed otherwise. This makes it unnecessary to single out anybody one way or the other and, at the same time, doesn't hurt the feelings of anybody who's got feelings that shouldn't be hurt.

In this connection, we can't pass up reference with the greatest of admiration to the crossed-swords who moved up at belly height to forward and very unhealthy positions to spend Christmas with the boys. Or the very big brass who visited troops who had been in the line too long, and answered their apology for not being shaved with the simple tribute: "It's all right, lads. I shaved for you this morning."

No tarnish on their brass.

\* \* \* \*

To what lengths the odd senior officer would go to try and help the little Joe in the line is illustrated by the following:

Three fighting lads from a Highland regiment, who

**"LOOK NIT WIT! THAT WUZ  
MY GREAT COAT YOU ISSUED  
THIS MORNING!"**







"HASN'T CHANGED A BIT IN TWO YEARS!"



had been more than earning their pay in rather arduous work that involved reducing the nominal roll of the Wehrmacht, were given a breather and told to go see a movie or something. They hit a rear area town geared for action. But they found sold out signs on the two local movie houses; unit parties, sorry bud, at the local dance palaces and taverns; the hamburger stand burgerless, and signs offering discouraging advice from the provost on anything else that might be interesting.

Understandably disgruntled, the trio returned to resume the fight for king and country, but one of the gents took time out to put his beef in writing and the letter eventually found its way to the desk of a big brass. This general didn't tell somebody else to worry about it. He investigated himself and discovered the author of the letter had been killed in action two days after he signed his name.

That might have been that for some, but not this commander. Five-hundred copies of the soldier's letter, details of his death and pointed suggestion there be no closing of entertainment doors to the men in the line—even if the rear echelon johnnies saw only one movie a week—were printed and sent to all recreation supervisors. With a personal follow-up on same.

It was the effort of a thoughtful, interested, conscientious soldier.

But we'll still take our brass . . . in a band.

\* \* \* \*







**"MOST EMBARRASSIN' SITUASHUN IN M'ARMY CAREER!"**

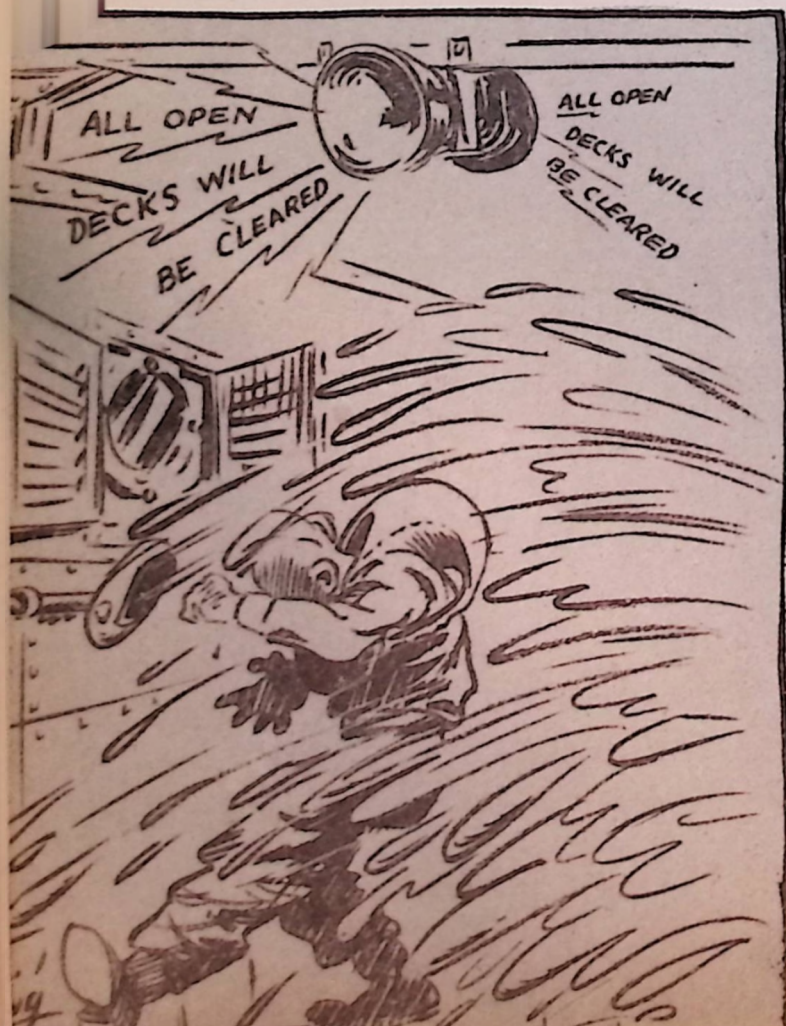


## IX

### Next Week: "East Lynne"

After years of oft-times painful research and a speaking acquaintance with at least a few of the horrors of war, we still haven't got straight the relationship of morale and moral. If an army Joe was happy, his morale was good. But if he was happy because his nose had been in a glass, his moral was bad. Or thereabouts. It was confusing.

In an attempt to provide moral morale boosters, several organizations tackled the problem of entertaining the troops. Some sarcastic observers intimated the problem was over the goal-line before they brought it down. And, just as a precaution, two sign painters were added to each provost company. But these organizations were not to be discouraged—they said the troops were going to be entertained, whether they liked it or not.



**"IMAGINE SEVENTY-ONE DAYS  
OF THIS AN' COLUMBUS DIDN'T  
EVEN GIT A MENTION IN DIS-  
PATCHES!"**





SOUTHAMPTON 45.

*"THAT'S HARDLY NECESSARY, SOLDIER!"*



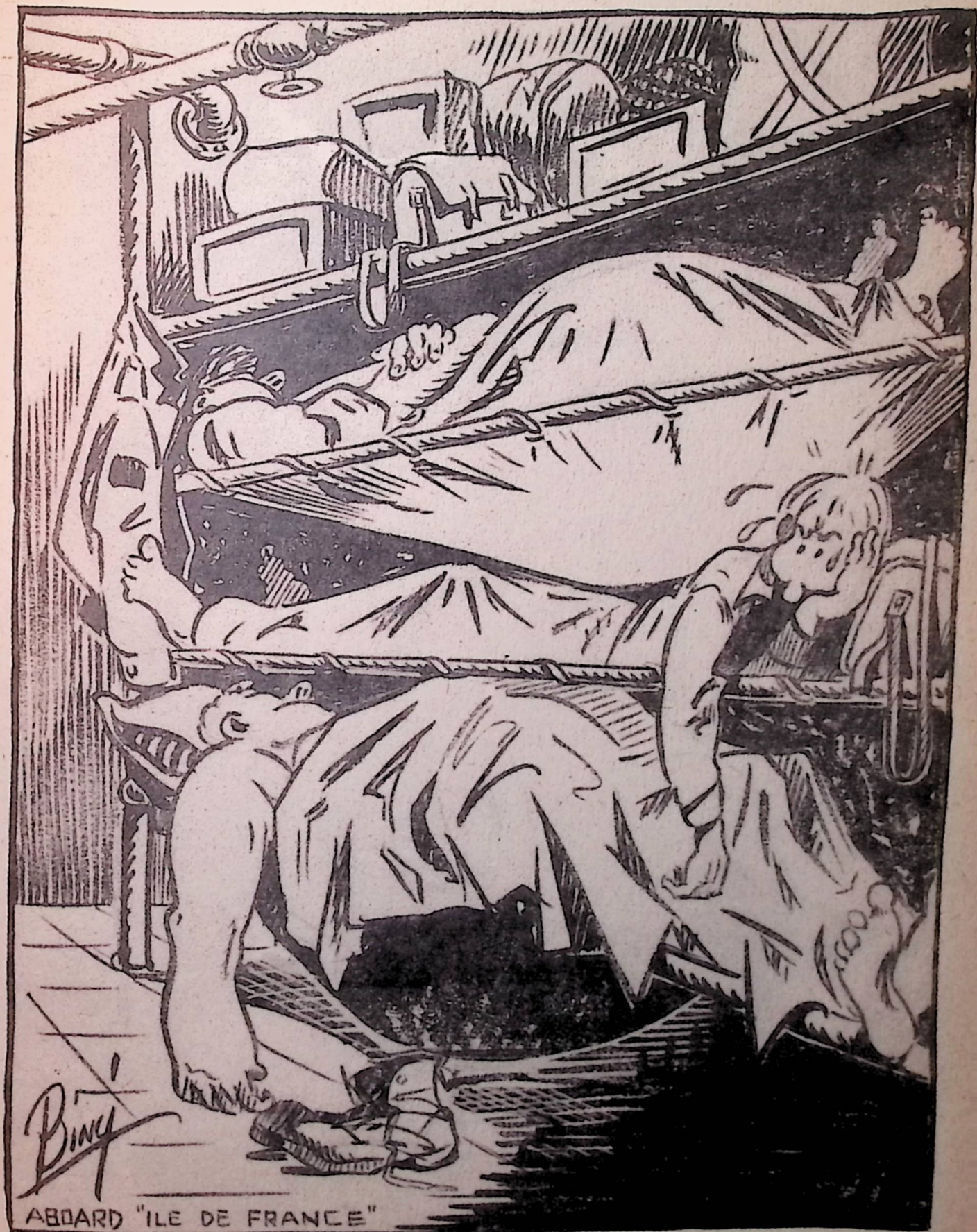


*"AN HE'S THE JOE THAT WUZ  
HOLLERIN' ABOUT STANDIN'  
STEADY!"*

The result was that all the turkeys that had been produced on Hollywood farms for the previous 10 years were shipped overseas to gobble from the screen at Canadian troops. This caused a wave of manic depressive psychosis among the troops, even effecting some guys who liked George Formby, which was not amazing in itself because we'd always figured them potential manic depressives anyway. When the graph line on the morale chart at headquarters started to go through a hole in the floor into the basement, it was suggested that something might be wrong somewhere.

A yell for help brought ENSA to the rescue. We never have been able to remember what those initials stand for but, looking back on it all now, we can hardly believe that the E was consistently associated with entertainment. But to show any of those well-meaning English folk that we aren't lacking in appreciation, we'll come right out here and now and state that there





ABOARD "ILE DE FRANCE"



were some good ENSA shows. Why, even George Formby was in a couple.

\* \* \* \*

So these two guys come out on the stage, see. They're comedians, see. And the guy in the bowler and check pants says like this:

"I say, old boy, I *have* got news. Ho-ho-ho."

And the guy in the homburg and the stripe pants says like this:

"How interesting."

And the guy in the b and cp says:

"Yes, old boy, I saw O'Reilly out with an old bag last night."

And the guy in the h and sp says:

"Oh, really?"

And the guy in the b and cp says:

"No, O'Reilly. Ho-ho-ho."

That's a joke, see. An ENSA joke.

\* \* \* \*

This sort of thing went on for quite a while and the Canadian soldiery were beginning to think the "theatar's" better talent must be in the army because it sure as hell wasn't in ENSA until . . . two QM sergeants went on leave to London (QM sergeants being the only ones who could afford a leave in London), sweat out a queue and found some of this better talent very much in evidence at the Hippodrome. Those good old pounds, shillings and pence.

As time progressed and the scope of military activity broadened, it became increasingly apparent that ENSA, even at its best, couldn't compete with certain native attractions. Morale may have been high enough. But moral had a bad case of the shakes. The provost sign painters redoubled their output, with the result that the troops never did get to see some of the towns they captured.





"NOTHIN' LIKE A GOOD HEARTY MEAL IN ROUGH WEATHER!"



The organizations which had kept trying to attract the attention of the troops with double features, bank nights and sets of dishes, even produced some late releases but, by this time, all the Hollywood farms were turning out little else but turkeys and the gobbling was enough to make an Oscar blink. Opera houses were opened. Symphony orchestras sounded off. They even tried ballet and baseball. Variety, they figured, was the answer. For some guys, all the variety in the book never will be able to match a bottle and a blonde, interjects the ever sharp Herbie.

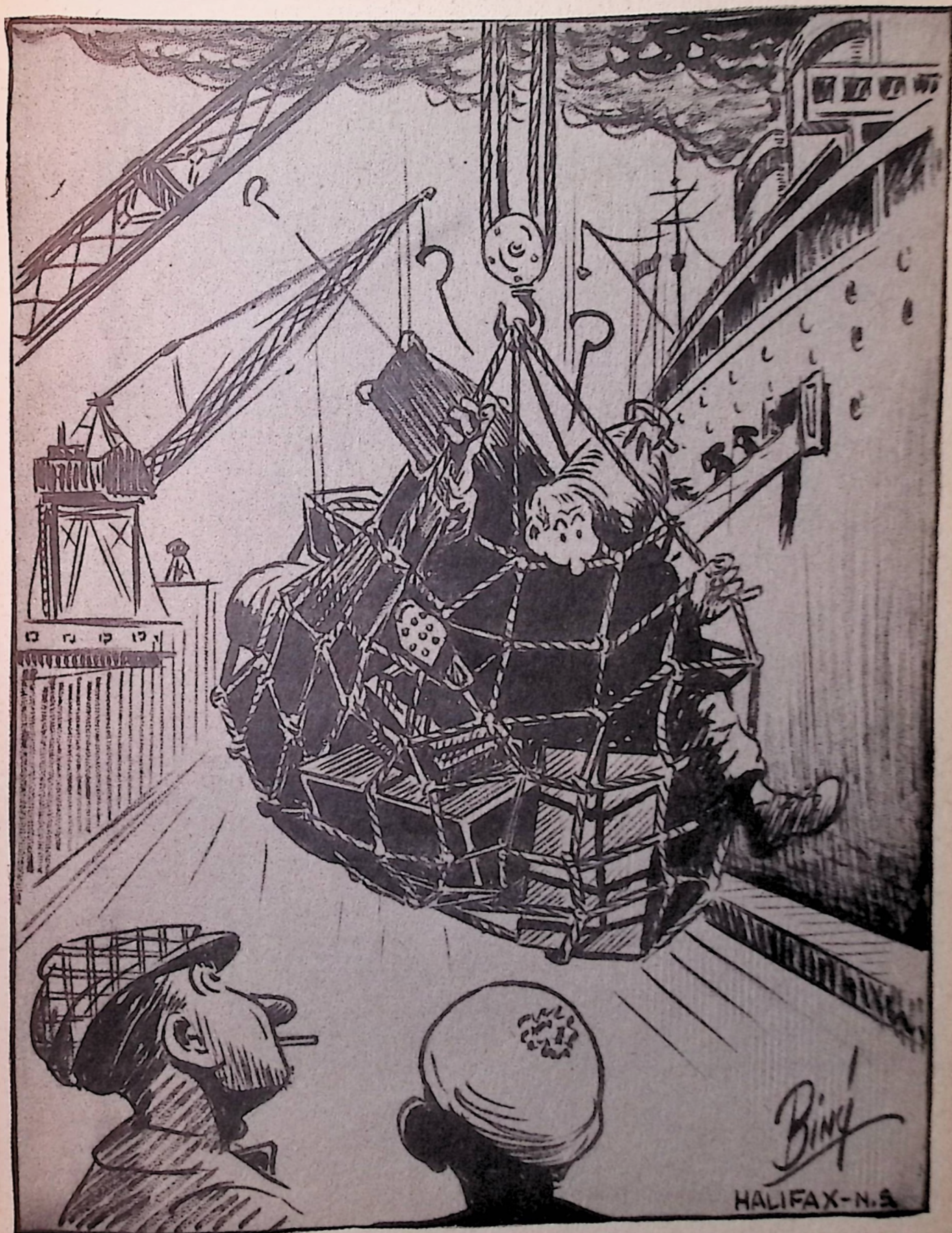
To continue. When headquarters at Ottawa got wind of what was going on and the way their soldier boys were pining for the sound of a silken, Canadian voice, the sight of a silken, Canadian leg, they issued a general alarm. In three hours the queue was so long in front of NDHQ, four war correspondents reported the army had gone into the nylon business.

All over the country, Canadian girls rallied to the cause, heeded the call, took up the torch, came to the aid of the concert party. The traffic overseas tripled overnight. The Queen Elizabeth had so much powder and perfume on her, she smelled like Lady Esther's factory. U-Boat commanders were thrown completely off the scent.

Canadian lovelies started to pop up all over the British Isles and Continental Europe. It proved almost too distracting. Even the opposition wanted to come over and join the fun. For a time, the arrival of the 462nd all-girl Canadian army show in Brussels was blamed for the Ardennes offensive. Apparently the Jerries didn't know the house had been sold out weeks in advance.

Army historians, if they dare tell the truth, will record for posterity the fact that the arrival of that gal, fourth from the left in the second row, advanced the surrender of the German forces in Northwest Europe by at least two weeks. Canadian soldiers suddenly realized what





"WIT THE BAGGAGE PARTY I PRESUME, SURE TAKES HIS JOB SERIOUSLY!"



they had been fighting for all this time. And with this knowledge, there was no stopping them.

Cherchez la femme.

\* \* \* \*

At times, the battledress bearers found the locals amusing, even entertaining. Take, for instance, the citizens of Passignano, a fishing village on Lake Trasimeno in Italy. They got their signals badly mixed and started carrying the ball the wrong way.

The Germans had been occupying the village until the Eighth Army decided their lease had run out and they vacated forthwith. The Ities gave our heroes a terrific welcome, tossed flowers and fish around, broke open a keg or two. The liberators, having duly liberated, proceeded in chase of Tedeschi. Quiet and Crown Prince Umberto reigned.

In the chase, two leg-weary Jerries were picked up by a patrol and steered by an escort in the general direction of a PW cage. The general direction was through Passignano and, as the mixed party turned a corner to enter the village, the escort pulled up to do battle with a Woodbine. The locals, seeing the Jerries trotting into the village on their own, figured they had been recaptured so . . .

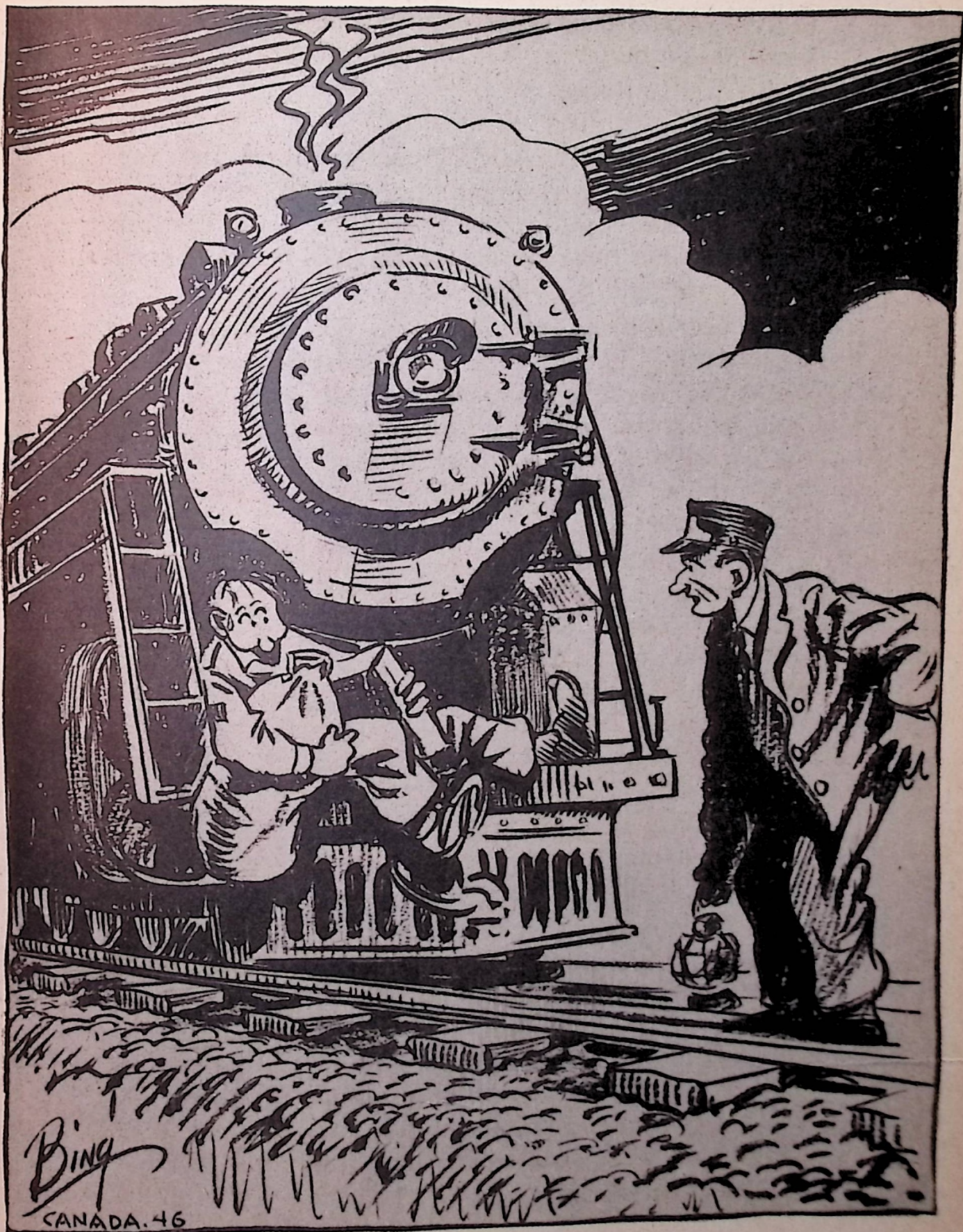
The Ities gave them a terrific welcome, tossed flowers and fish around, broke open a keg or two, said "We are so glad to see you again. We were wondering when you would return."

The escort, which had poked its collective nose around the corner, was considerably amused by all this and did not put in an appearance until the height of the celebration. Some people would have been embarrassed but not the Passignano reception committee.

They gave the Eighth another terrific welcome, tossed flowers and fish around, broke open a keg or two . . .

You can't beat fun.





"YER BACK IN CANADA SOLDIER, YA RIDE INSIDE!"



## X

### *Let's Not Forget*

Millions of words have been written about the little Joe in the war. The war correspondents who got close enough to the front to find out about such things, realized that there was more to the fracas than arrows on a map. They found out that maybe the big brass were running the show but it was the plain, ordinary, garden-variety guy with plenty of guts who was winning it.

For many good months, Canadian folk have been welcoming home these war-winners and the word rehabilitation rightly has been causing the leaders of the nation concern. Hundreds of citizens have been employed to see the veteran gets the break that's coming to him. Speeches have been made. Acts have been passed in Parliament. It has been reassuring to everybody but the guy who's spent all his gratuities and can't get a job.

All the planning and the speech-making in the book won't mean a thing to the veteran if his idea of rehabilitation isn't realized. And this idea is simply expressed, if not so easily achieved:

An opportunity to earn a decent living wage; a home for a wife and family; a radio, refrigerator, maybe a car, some of the things that make life's load a bit easier; a chance to have healthy, educated children; an annual vacation and entertainment now and then. In the sum, security and happiness.

No veteran will know real rehabilitation until he knows these things.





"THEY'RE ALL GILDERS CHUM, AN FER TH' THIRD AND LAST TIME, GIT EM OUT OF HERE!"



War has benefits. Medical and scientific progress. For some men, a better understanding of others. The revelation of character and courage. Appreciation. A sense of responsibility.

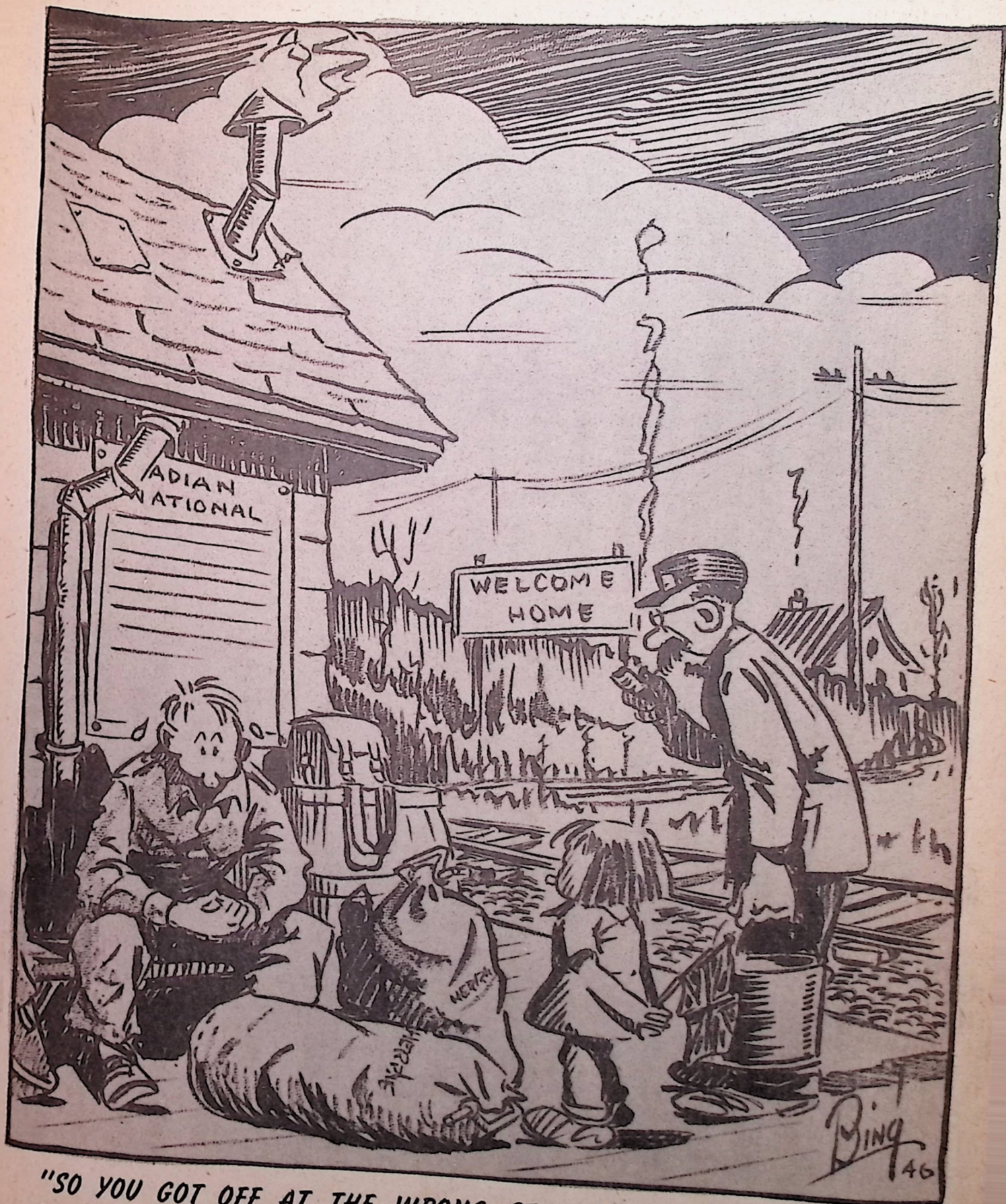
But war is the hardest way of all to achieve these benefits and the hurt to man is as long as life itself. Few Canadian homes have not been touched in some way by the pain of wound, the loss death brings. Tribute to those Canadian men who fought and died that others might live, is this story by a soldier of a soldier. It is a front-line obituary, written by Ronald Poulton, a Canadian.

It was on the Italian front. The smell of the barnyard was heavy in the damp air. The jeep rolled through the mud puddles and around the sodden haystack, and stopped in front of the door of a dirty farmhouse. Bill James stepped out of a room. The first thing he said was: "Did you know that Bert got it in our last show?"



**"THOSE STAIRS, HERBIE!"**





"SO YOU GOT OFF AT THE WRONG STATION EH SOLDIER, WELL THERE'LL BE A TRAIN HERE NEXT WEDNESDAY GOIN' T'OTTAWA!"



That's the way those things are told, casually, and yet with a soldier's deep regret underlying the words, everyone of which prompts memory of a guy you'd joined up with.

"Bert's dead." Just like that. It was stated so matter-of-factly, in the same sort of a way that you'd ask some Joe for a match. But that didn't detract any from the fact that the fellow who told you about it was one of a few hundred friends of the boy who's not up in the lines any more.

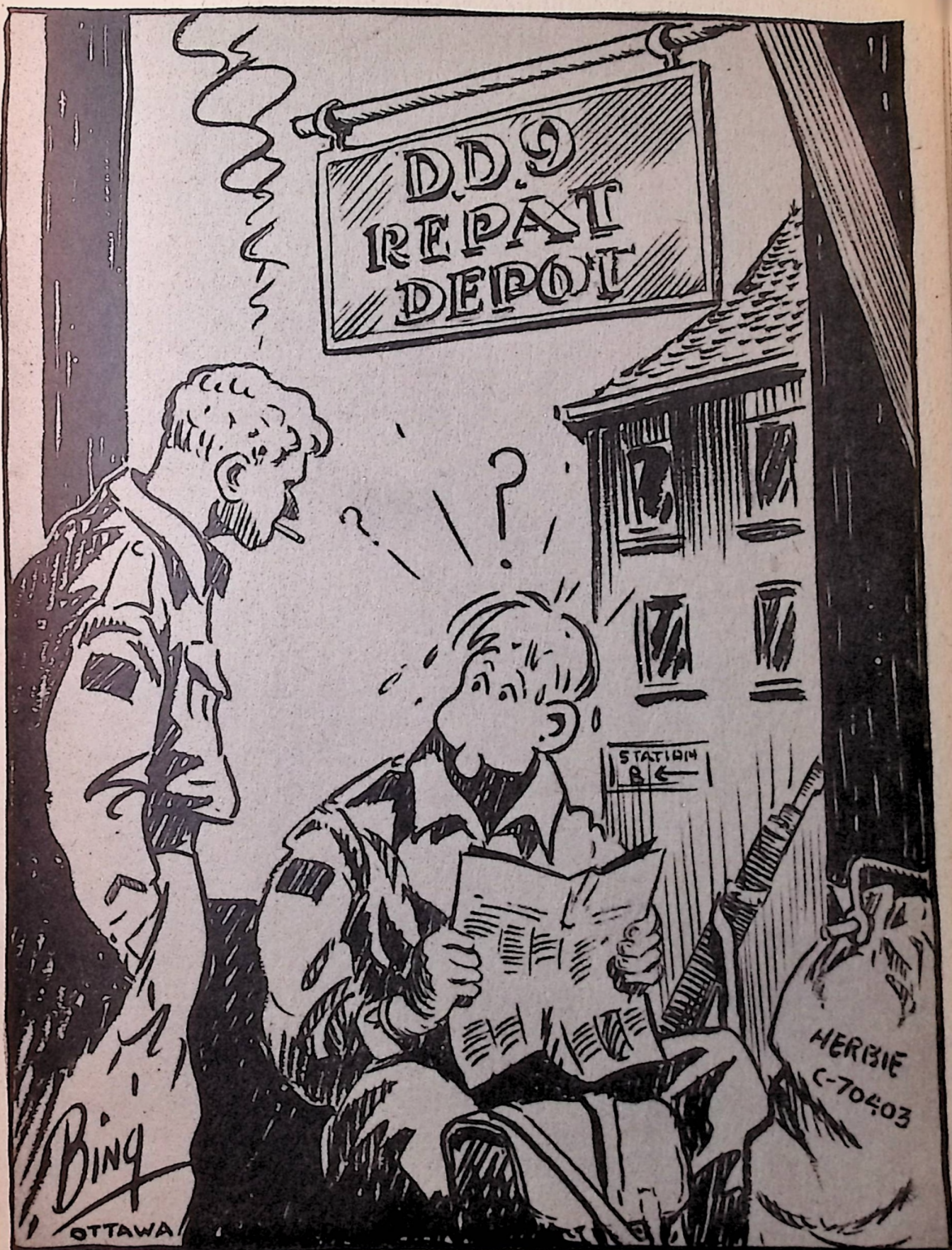
What happens inside a man when he hears that one of his best friends is gone? It happens every day. In the rain and under the sun, somebody tells somebody else the same kind of news and the listener's stomach becomes not so much empty as strangely still—just as if it wasn't a part of you. Everything goes quiet while your mind fastens on the thought that the guy you thought was one of those who'd never get it, had used up his bottom dog tag.

And you say aloud "Well, I'll be damned!" Or something stronger. And the words keep repeating themselves within your brain. And, after a while, you begin to remember things about the grinning, lumbering guy you sweated on kitchen fatigue with, the fellow you used to get drunk with on pub crawls in England and in canteens across Canada. You practically hear him say again: "This swill ain't fit for pigs. Who's gonna buy the next round?"

He was a hard drinker, but a clean drinker.

He had his full share of faults and virtues. Because of them, he was all man. He was up on the bit, too. Though where he learned the answers nobody could quite figure. He came from a village in Northern Saskatchewan so obscure that nobody had ever heard of it. But he was wiser than the wise guys thought they were, from the day he enlisted until the day he died.





"IF I KIN STICK IT OUT ANOTHER FEW DAYS I'LL BE ELIGIBLE  
FER THE CLASP TO MY C.V.S.M.!"



Since nothing was ever written about him before and nothing probably ever will be again, it would be good to say that he was handsome, that he was dutiful to his superiors, that he wrote his mother every week. But if Bert's ghost ever read such an obituary, he'd tab it with the well-known soldier's label for anything that isn't true.

No doubt he was attractive in a way. He was as tall as six feet one can make a man, and rawboned. He moved with an unconscious swagger that lent him a swashbuckling look. But his features were as irregular as his nature. And he wasn't the type to write letters . . . "Can't get around to it," he'd say. All his yearning for home was expressed in a few words and a softening of the features in rare moments with the men who knew him best.

His independence of spirit placed him among those who have given Canadians a name. And, because he wasn't amenable to discipline, they took him out of his tank troop one time to teach him a lesson.

But they must have let him in behind the tiller bars again. Because he got it the other day. He got it clean—cut in two by an 88 millie. And he's buried with a lot of his kind beside a dusty trail north of the Conca river.

He was a hell of a good guy.











*Any resemblance of characters in this book to soldiers  
living or half-dead is quite possible  
and highly probable*





